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ABSTRACT

Noting that the fastest growing populations in the United States are biracial and multiethnic children, this multimedia exploration of dual-heritage children was developed to inform the early care and education community of the unique identity development of biracial children and their families. The multi-media packet is comprised of an educator's guide, a 30-minute videotape, and a set of five, poster-sized family portraits to welcome and affirm multiethnic children and families. Following introductory remarks providing tips for group facilitators and definitions of relevant terms, the educator's guide is organized into 6 topic areas designed to be explored in facilitated discussions that promote the sharing of ideas and experiences: (1) stages of identity development; (2) identifying and responding to the unique experience of biracial children and their families; (3) racial and cultural labeling; (4) the impact of environmental factors on multiracial children; (5) ensuring cultural sensitivity in child care; and (6) integrating materials and activities on biracial children into existing multicultural curricula. Each topic area includes learning objectives, teaching methods and suggested activities, required materials and additional information. A framework for each topic area includes the use of videos, handouts, overhead transparencies, additional readings, and resources for further exploration. Appended are resources and suggested reading for children, youth, and adults as well as information on transracial adoption. The videotape contains footage from child care facilities and family interviews highlighting the importance of understanding the unique experience of the multiracial family. The videotape also features adoption and early childhood professionals and biracial individuals discussing identity development in biracial and multiethnic children and integrating materials and activities for multiethnic children in early childhood settings. The

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video emphasizes the impact of a positive self image on adjustment and achievement, milestones in caregivers' understanding of racial/ethnic identity development, stages of ethnic identity, and the importance of practitioners articulating the program philosophy regarding mixed race to families and respecting how families deal with racial issues. (KB)

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Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families

A VIDEO AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

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Childcare Health Program

Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

funded by

THE K & F BAXTER FAMILY FOUNDATION

developed by

THE CHILDCARE HEALTH PROGRAM

2625 Alcatraz Avenue
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2003 Edition

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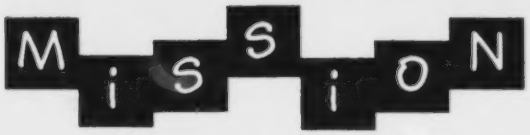

The Childcare Health Program is dedicated to children's healthy development through the promotion of quality child care and by facilitating linkages among the health, safety and child care communities and the diverse families they serve.

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INTRODUCTION

by Francis Wardle, Ph.D., Director, Center for the Study of Biracial Children

In 1982, when my oldest daughter was 4 years old, my wife and I decided we had to carefully analyze the best way to raise multiracial children in this race-conscious society. As good academics, we consulted the experts. Among the advice we got regarding raising our children was this gem, "We don't really know the best way to raise children of mixed heritage.... why don't you wait till we do"!

Luckily, in 2003 we do know quite a bit about the best way to raise our children. We know that children as young as 3 years old do notice skin color and other physical features, but they do not see race. We know that, despite the common myth, society does not necessarily see a biracial (black/white) child as black (my children have been "seen" as Vietnamese, Brazilian, Asian/Indian, Asian American, Native American, Hispanic and Samoan), and young multiracial children need a label to call themselves and defend themselves from insensitive peers and adults who keep asking, "Well, what are you, anyway?" Finally, we know many of our children experience harassment from all single-race children, not just white children.

While we have always had children of mixed heritage in this country (going back to colonial times, where they were viewed as "the new Americans"), our country's history of single-race preoccupation has led to a void regarding issues of mixed heritage. And part of this vacuum is language. In a country like Brazil, where mixed heritage and identity have been a visible part of that country's history since colonial times, there exists a rich variety of language to describe all people of mixed heritage. When I first started writing on this topic I used the term *biracial*; now I prefer *multiethnic* and *multiracial.* But I know these terms will change, as the fields of education, psychology, child care, social work and research begin to address the needs of our children and their families.

The *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families Educator's Guide* is a wonderful vehicle in this process, furthering the debate about what is best for mixed-race children and their families. In these debates and discussions there are, naturally, many healthy opinions and viewpoints – partly because the issue has been taboo for so long. What must never be lost, however, is the need for every child to feel secure, proud and empowered by his/her total heritage and identity, and the right of every person to self-identify. Our job is to support these children in their quest for security and self-identity.

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WHY CREATE AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE FOR BIRACIAL AND MULTIETHNIC CHILDEN?

Increasing numbers of biracial and multiethnic children are utilizing child care today. This has created a demand for additional resources and information to be developed and made available to both child care professionals and parents. Awareness of cultural diversity has heightened over the past decade, resulting in a vast array of multicultural children's books and curricula with a commitment to address issues pertaining to race and culture, recognizing the strong correlation between a child's success and their racial/ethnic self-esteem. Concepts used in this educator's guide include child development for all children, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Although multicultural materials, children's books, diversity classes and trainings are available, the unique issues facing biracial children are seldom addressed. It is important for multiethnic children to process their dual identities, which requires assistance and sensitivity from the adults in their lives, including the child care provider. To successfully assist with this important developmental task, information and resources specifically geared to meeting the needs of dual-heritage children must be available to child care providers. Child care providers must also be willing to examine their biases and assumptions, demonstrate consideration of the family's values and beliefs, and view each child's circumstances individually.

HOW WILL THIS EDUCATOR'S GUIDE BE HELPFUL?

The topics covered and the resources offered in this educator's guide are designed to assist child care providers in integrating activities and materials that focus specifically on biracial and multiethnic children into existing multicultural understanding. All children possess a uniqueness that defines them as an individual. Cultural competency requires consideration of the singular circumstances of each child and her family, then application of best early childhood practices.

Throughout this educator's guide a multitude of terms will be used to talk about biracial and multiethnic children. There are many ways to refer to the mixed-race experience in the United States and different people use different terms depending on the way they embrace their identity. The important thing to remember is that language is flexible and changes often as we develop new understandings of the vast differences in the human experience. Encouraging children to use positive language to refer to their dual-heritage is key in building strong self-esteem. As today's biracial children grow up they will have the opportunity and language to self identify as they see fit, which traditionally has not been the case. Some of the acceptable and interchangeable terms that are used today are listed in the box to the right.

INTERCHANGEABLE TERMS	
Biracial	Multiethnic
Biethnic	Multicultural
Bicultural	Mixed-race
Multiracial	Dual-heritage

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

This guide is most effective when used as a supplement to a broad multicultural curriculum.

TARGET AUDIENCE Child care providers, trainers/instructors, parents, mixed groups, etc.

GROUP SIZE 15-20 (ideal)

WHO CAN TRAIN Experienced trainers, community college instructors and those who have training experience in the field of diversity. All who use the educator's guide are expected to be culturally competent trainers.

MATERIALS NEEDED Handouts and overheads from this guide, which can be photocopied and handed out to students or copied onto transparencies.

VCR and Monitor

Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*

Overhead Projector *(if using transparencies)*

Flip Chart/Chalkboard/Whiteboard

LENGTH OF TRAINING Five to six hours are required to cover the material in a thoughtful and thorough manner. Length of time and selection of individual topics depend on availability of time, learning needs and trainer's preference for using transparencies, videos, discussion and/or demonstration.

If you have a limited amount of time be sure to include the following topics:

- Stages of Racial Identity Development
- Identifying and Responding to the Unique Experiences of Biracial Children
- Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care Programs

VIDEO The 30-minute video *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families* is best viewed in its entirety, but if time does not permit, it can be viewed in segments relative to discussion points along with articles and activities located in the educator's guide.

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THE MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS TO COVER

The following chart will assist trainers in determining the most appropriate topics when less than the suggested six hours for training is available. The selection of topics, handouts and activities is dependent on time available for presentation and the audience.

TOPICS	HANDOUTS	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES	TOTAL TIME
#1 Ages and Stages of Identity Development	1.1 Ages and Stages of Identity Development 1.2 Stages of Racial and Cultural Identity Development 1.3 Children and Diversity 1.4 How Prejudice Is Learned 1.5 Suggestions for Developing Positive Racial Attitudes	▫ Review the developmental stages. ▫ Ask participants to share their assumptions and previous understanding. ▫ After viewing the video, facilitate a discussion (if sufficient time for video). ▫ Emphasize the important points. ▫ Allow time for questions/answers.	60 minutes
#2 Identifying and Responding	2.1 Mixed: A Poem 2.2 Biracial and Multicultural Children Speak Out 2.3 The Anatomy of an Identity Crisis 2.4 Shades of History 2.5 Parenting Biracial Children 2.6 Sample Intake Form	▫ Make a list of the factors that impact the varying perspectives and identity choices of multiracial children. ▫ Brainstorm with participants to identify and list the unique needs of biracial children and families, and how they compare to families of one ethnicity. ▫ Develop strategies for working with the family that support and respect their choices. ▫ Review the strategies devised and discuss how child care providers can implement strategies in their programs. ▫ Allow time for questions and answers.	60 minutes

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TOPICS	HANDOUTS	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES	TOTAL TIME
#3 Racial and Cultural Labeling	3.1 Checking the Box 3.2 Challenging the Need for Racial Labels 3.3 Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People 3.4 "Maybe He Should Choose Black" 3.5 The Experiences of Mixed-Race People	▫ Introduce the topic to engage participants in a discussion/brainstorm session. ▫ Have participants identify their perceptions and views regarding identifying one race, and the need for additional multicultural categories for biracial people on official forms and other usage for identification purposes. ▫ Discuss the differing points of view regarding the child and/or family's consideration of the appropriate label. ▪ Allow time for questions and answers.	30 – 45 minutes
#4 The Impact of Environmental Factors	4.1 The Impact of Environmental Factors 4.2 Reflecting on Identity and Beliefs 4.3 Transracial Adoption of Mixed-Race Youth 4.4 Black Unlike Me 4.5 What a Teacher Can Do	▫ Discuss what is meant by environmental factors and how the child care community is a part of that. ▫ Discuss the participants' community response to biracial children. ▫ How can the child care program make a difference? ▪ Allow time for open discussion of issues.	30 minutes
#5 Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care	5.1 Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care Programs 5.2 Questions to Ask Yourself About Diversity 5.3 It's Not Always Black and White 5.4 Coping with Cultural Conflicts Between Parents 5.5 Staff Workshop: Exploring Family Diversity 5.6 Ways and Means	▪ Briefly discuss what cultural sensitivity and competence are. ▪ How would this differ for biracial children? ▪ What does it take for the child care provider to be culturally competent and sensitive?	30 minutes
#6 Integrating Materials and Activities	6.1 Integrating Materials and Activities 6.2 Multicultural Materials 6.3 What Crayon Am I? 6.4 One Big Family 6.5 Activities for Learning	▫ What do I have to do differently for multicultural children? ▪ Consider these materials, resources and activities.	30 minutes

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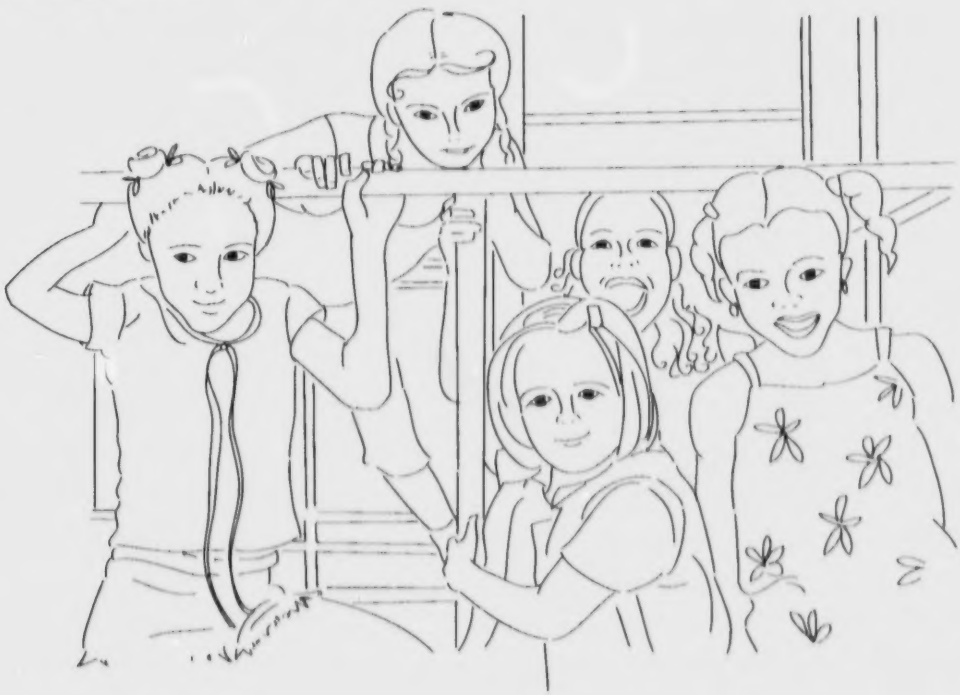
HOW TO USE THIS EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

This guide is for use by experienced trainers and those who have experience in the field of diversity. It will be most effective when used as a supplement to a broad multicultural/anti-bias curriculum, thus strengthening the existing model of multicultural education. Other suggested areas of integration include training curricula for child development, children with special needs, self-esteem and school-age children. Community college instructors may wish to integrate some or all of the topic areas in their course outline and use the handouts and resources from this guide to supplement their current course materials and resources.

Each topic area includes learning objectives, teaching methods and suggested activities, required materials and additional information. Facilitated discussions that promote the sharing of ideas and experiences are core elements of this guide. A framework for presenting each topic area includes the use of videos, handouts, overhead transparencies, additional readings, and resources for further exploration. The guide contains numerous resources for instructors, providers and parents. If you do not have sufficient time or funds to use all handouts, a list of those additional resources available would be helpful for students who wish to pursue the subject in more depth than your time and budget allow.

Articles that accompany topic areas are intended for incorporation into the discussion/lecture portion of the presentation. To maximize learning, students should read the articles in their entirety before or after the training session. They are intended to promote meaningful discussions that consider a variety of approaches and points of view. It is very important that the instructor/trainer read the articles before using any of them as a learning resource.



LENGTH OF TRAINING

Five to six hours
of training are required to cover the material in a thoughtful and thorough manner.

A half-day workshop (3 – 4 hours)
will allow for an overview of the topic areas with a focus on the importance of the following: value clarification for providers; consideration of the developmental framework when discussing issues of race and ethnicity; adaptation of materials and activities to include biracial children; and assuring cultural sensitivity in all work with adults and children. Focused facilitation of discussions is critical when providing an overview of the materials. Excerpts of the video, *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families* can be used along with overhead transparencies.

A one and one-half to two-hour presentation
allows for a general overview of the subject area, outline presentation of topics and some dialogue. If you have a limited amount of time to present, consider your audience and the materials that will convey the key concepts and match your training style. Excerpts of the video, *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families* can be used along with overhead transparencies.

If you assume that your audience is unlikely to have completed a diversity training workshop, we recommend that you include the following topics:

- Ages and Stages of Identity Development
- Identifying and Responding to the Unique Experiences of Biracial Children
- Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care Programs
- Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*

FOSTERING AN ATMOSPHERE OF TRUST

Always foster an atmosphere of trust and safety in all training sessions by establishing ground rules ensuring respectful treatment of all participants and their views.

- One person speaks at a time.
- No one is ridiculed for the experiences they share.
- Confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Growth and honesty are supported.
- Practice good dialogue techniques.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DIALOGUE AND AN ARGUMENT?

Dialoguing is an approach to conflict that aims to reach agreement and solve problems. The goal is not to win, but to gather information and understand the other person's perspective, then find the best solution for all concerned. In contrast, the object of an argument is to win. Some other differences between dialogue and argument:

- The arguer tells; the dialoguer asks.
- The arguer tries to persuade and convince; the dialoguer seeks to learn.
- The arguer considers her point of view the best one; the dialoguer is willing to understand multiple viewpoints.
- The arguer tries to prove the other person wrong; the dialoguer considers that she has a gap in her knowledge.

In small groups, come up with three more examples of good dialogue techniques:

1.

2.

3.

CONVERSATIONS WE'RE NOT HAVING ABOUT DIVERSITY

by Christina Lopez Morgan

Conversations about our differences...

- only scratch the surface, leaving deeper feelings and issues safely buried
- perpetuate patterns of bias and racism by not naming our feelings and experiences
- have the power to keep the hope of community alive or isolate us in our individual perspectives

Conversations about racism and how it has damaged each of us...

- we don't know how to begin, and are unsure of how to sustain
- we don't want to have because we're afraid of being hurt or hurting others
- we don't know how to have because no one ever taught us how to talk about our pain

Conversations that reflect our place and power in society...

- include us because there is a place for our voice
- exclude us because we don't speak the language of the group
- give our words power or silence them by how they are perceived

Conversations that are the key to change...

- we must begin to have because if we're not talking to each other, there is no hope
- we owe one another because through these conversations, we learn to talk about and reconcile our differences
- we have to find the courage to engage in because it is the only way to gain mutual respect and understanding

Conversations that I participate in...

- weigh heavy on my heart because I know I am part of stopping them
- remind me I can't get into another person's skin, but can only listen and try to honor his or her perspective
- I'm responsible for starting because someone has to take the risk

Conversations that are the legacy of our past, the hope of our future...

- conversations that our ancestors never had, that history has rarely seen
- conversations that have the potential for constructing a more equitable and just world
- conversations that ultimately determine the future we leave our children

Source: *A Place to Begin*. California T[illegible], Oakland, CA (1999).

NOTE THESE STATISTICS

As mentioned in the introduction, increasing numbers of biracial and multiethnic children utilize child care services. The statistics below are an indication of rapidly changing demographics covering interracial marriage, numbers of biracial and multiethnic children and transracial adoption.

7 million people or 2.4% of the U.S. population identified themselves as "More Than One Race" according to Census 2000.

Out of the above 7 million people, 98% identified as "Two Races."

7.4% or 4 million married couple households in the U.S. hold spouses that have different races or origins.

Census 2000 identified nearly 4 million multiracial children in the US.

Almost a third of the children adopted from the foster care system are placed with families of a different race.

75% of children adopted from other countries by Americans, are transracial.

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

The terms used are intended to be inclusive, to form a baseline of language to be utilized for the purpose of discussion, and to exchange information in a safe and non-threatening environment. However, these terms are part of an emerging and changing dynamic, and may not be reflective of all points of view. Through this process we anticipate other terms will be used and offered by participants.

ACCULTURATION

The way people and cultures change and adapt as they are exposed to other peoples and cultures; the dynamic, ever-changing nature of societies.
(Wardle and Cruz-Janzen, 2003)

AFRICAN AMERICAN

According to the census, a person "having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their races as 'Black, African American, or Negro,' or provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian."
(Census Bureau, 2000)

ASIAN AMERICAN

Self-identification among people of Asian descent. Eighteen detailed Asian race and ethnic categories are used in displaying data from Census 2000: Asian Indian, Bangladeshi, Cambodian, Chinese, Taiwanese, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Thai, Vietnamese, other Asian.

ASSIMILATION

The expectation that new immigrants will shed their own culture and language to become fully American. Also the expectation that minorities within the country will assume mainstream white cultural values.
(Wardle and Cruz-Janzen, 2003)

BIAS

An opinion, attitude or tendency formed without evidence. Favoring one group of people over the other, often without justification.

BIETHNIC

A child or person of parents from two different ethnic groups according to the categories designated by the U.S. Census. (i.e. Hispanic, which is not seen as a race but as an ethnicity.)

BIRACIAL

A child or person of parents from two different races according to the categories designated by the U.S. Census (i.e. Asian, White, Black or Native American). Other terms include mixed race, dual heritage, Hapa and mestizo.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

The ability to function effectively with people from a variety of cultural and other backgrounds.

CULTURE

The sharing of social, religious, linguistic and other values and beliefs held by a group of people which are passed on through generations.

ETHNICITY

A shared cultural worldview and/or geographic origin. Members of ethnic groups, such as Latinos in the United States, may not share common distinguishing cultural, racial, language, or other characteristics but are joined together by a United States-designated category based on their world region/countries of origin. (Wardle and Cruz-Janzen, 2003). Some Jewish people consider being Jewish an ethnicity as well.

HAPA

Hawaiian in origin, Hapa is a term commonly used to describe an Asian American or Pacific Islander American of mixed heritage.

LATINO

A self-designated classification for people whose origins are from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, the Caribbean, or those identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, etc. Origin can be viewed as ancestry, nationality, or country of birth of the person or person's parents or ancestors prior to their arrival in the United States.
(U.S. Census 2000)

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continued

MISCEGENATION
Refers to race mixing in intimate dating and sexual relationships. Thus, antimiscegenation means against intermarriage or against race mixing. The last antimiscegenation laws were repealed in 1967 by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling.
(Root, 1996)

MULTICULTURAL
Implies a sense of simultaneous connection to and the embracing of more than one culture. The overlapping of several cultures.

MULTIRACIAL
Refers to people who are of two or more racial heritages.

MULATTO
Someone who is of varying fractions of African and European heritage. Not all racially mixed persons view this as a positive designation. Its original meaning has negative connotations; many believe the word is derived from the Spanish mulatto for mule, the infertile hybrid between donkey and horse.
(Root, 1996)

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION
An educational movement designed to make sure students from diverse racial and ethnic groups, genders, economic backgrounds, and special needs, have equal opportunity to succeed in schools and universities.
(Banks and Banks, 1997)

ONE-DROP RULE
The uniquely United States approach to race that maintains that anyone with "one drop" of African blood is Black. The rule also includes people with other mixtures, with the race or ethnicity of the lowest status defining the person's racial or ethnic identity.
(Wardle and Cruz-Janzen, 2003)

RACE
A socially constructed way of grouping people which differs from society to society, and has no biological basis. Race is an arbitrary system of visual classification of people into groups such as Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American. This concept is based on visible criteria such as color of skin, texture of hair and facial features.

RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY
Defined as a sense of group or collective identity based upon one's personal identity and perception of sharing a common heritage with a particular racial group.

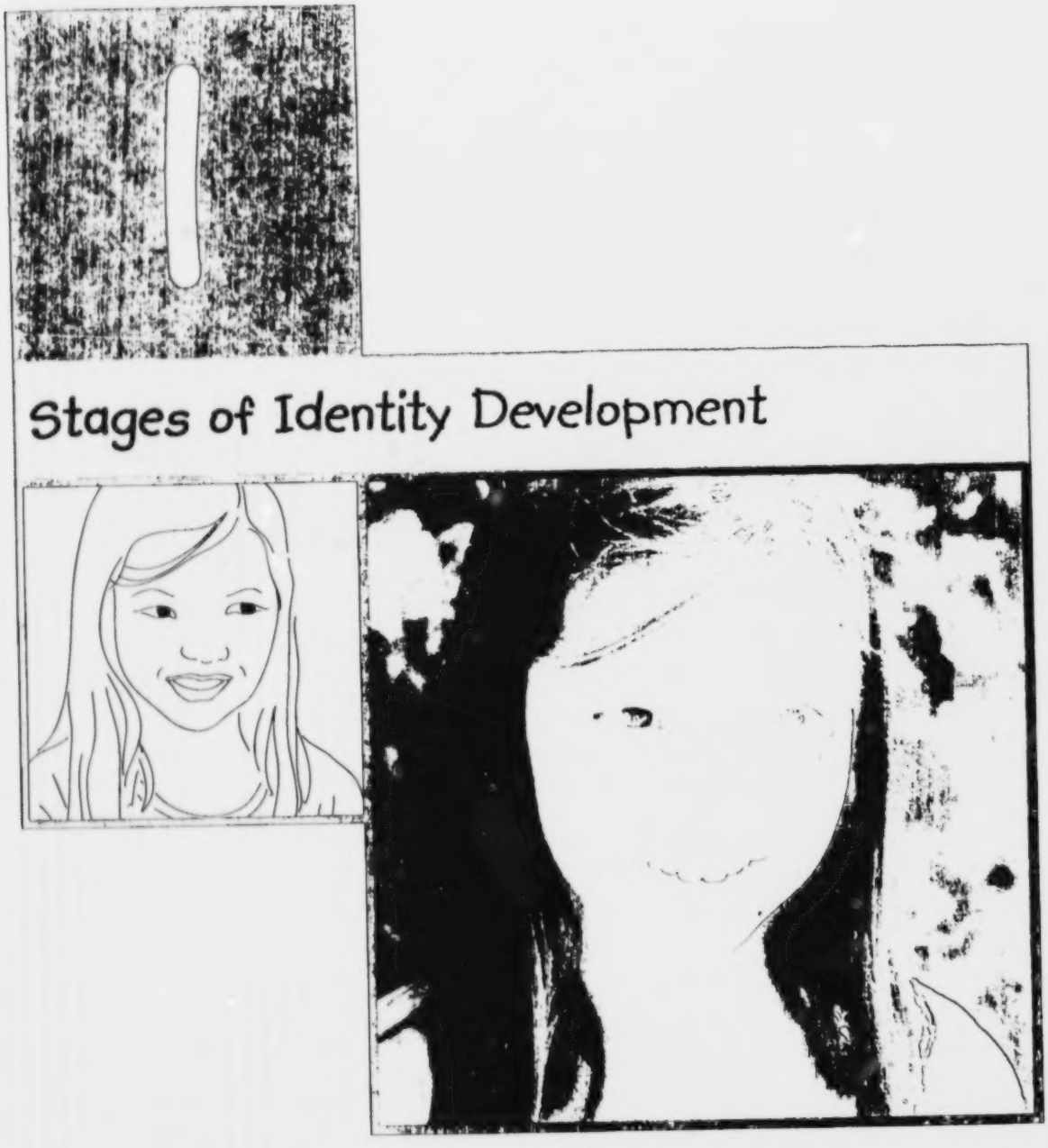
RACISM
The belief that a particular race is inferior or superior to other races and using that belief to practice discrimination and institutionalized oppression.

STEREOTYPE
A fixed image of a person or group of people, which is oversimplified and does not consider the individual. Can be positive or negative.

TRANSRACIAL
Indicates movement across racial boundaries and is sometimes synonymous with "interracial." This term is most notably used in the context of adoption across racial lines.
(Root, 1996)

U.S. CENSUS CATEGORIES
The racial and ethnic categories used by the census to collect demographic information. The 2000 Census allowed people to select more than one race/ethnicity for the first time.

WHITE
According to Census 2000, a white person is someone who self identifies as "having origins in any of the original people of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as 'white' or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Arab, or Polish."
(Census Bureau, 2000)



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STAGES OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

RATIONALE

Identity is an emerging concept for all children, though more complex for multiracial children. Depending on a variety of factors such as the child's developmental stage, physical characteristics and family philosophy, a multiracial child may choose to identify with one or both of her racial or cultural groups.

A developmental perspective of identity development enables child care providers to initiate activities and facilitate developmentally appropriate discussions which will enhance the biracial child's sense of self. However, *all* children benefit from this approach.

Using this framework, child care providers are able to anticipate reactions and questions, and avoid misunderstandings regarding racial awareness, thus promoting a positive sense of self with respect to all children.

TIME

30 – 45 minutes *(depending on time spent for video)*

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Gain knowledge of the stages of identity development
- Be able to respond to the questions and behaviors of children at various developmental stages
- Understand identity as an emerging concept for multiracial children
- Anticipate questions and remarks from children regarding race and culture
- Assist parents in understanding the stages of identity development
- Help children celebrate differences

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continued

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. p. 17 Handout 1.1: *Stages of Identity Development*
   p. 18 Handout 1.2: *Stages of Racial and Cultural Identity Development*
   p. 19 Handout 1.3: *Children and Diversity*
   p. 21 Handout 1.4: *How Prejudice Is Learned*
   p. 22 Handout 1.5: *Suggestions for Developing Positive Racial Attitudes*
   p. 23 Overhead 1.1: *Factors Which Influence Identity Development*
   p. 24 Overhead 1.2: *Stages of Racial and Cultural Identity Development*
2. Flip chart and markers
3. VCR and monitor
4. Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*

TEACHING METHODS AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have participants read Handout 1.3: *Children and Diversity* and Handout 1.4: *How Prejudice Is Learned* before discussion.
- Review the developmental stages from Handout 1.1: *Stages of Identity Development* and Handout 1.2: *Stages of Racial and Cultural Identity Development*, and give examples of how child care providers can respond appropriately to children regarding issues of race and culture.
- Ask participants to share their assumptions and previous understanding of racial and ethnic identity development in young children, as well as their personal experiences. Use Overhead 1.1: *Factors Which Influence Identity Development* and Overhead 1.2: *Stages of Racial and Cultural Identity Development* to facilitate the discussion.
- After viewing the video, facilitate a discussion about the people interviewed in the video, contrasting participants' previous experiences and assumptions.
- Use Handout 1.5: *Suggestions for Developing Positive Racial Attitudes* to facilitate a discussion of the topic.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

a. Issues of race, ethnicity and culture can be emotionally charged. Be mindful of the sensitive nature of the subject areas when facilitating discussion.

b. Foster an atmosphere of trust and safety by establishing ground rules for respect.

c. In presenting information on the subject areas, stress the importance of talking about values and opinions without imposing them on others.

d. Listen rather than judge.

HANDOUT 1.1

STAGES OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

To understand the issues facing biracial and multiethnic children, familiarity with the ages and stages of identity development is essential. Without a developmental perspective, a child's remarks or actions can easily be misunderstood, and your response may be hurtful to the child. Curiosity is an invaluable trait in young children. There seems to be no end to questions, and in their candor, children may provoke discomfort among adults on matters that are sensitive or emotionally charged. Because of this discomfort, adults have a tendency to avoid the issue and hush the child, so to speak. In a race-conscious society such as ours, this often happens when children are seeking honest answers to very logical, straightforward and sometimes simple questions. Avoiding questions can lead to a negative association with differences, be it children's awareness of their own differences or the differences of others.

HOW MUCH DO YOUNG CHILDREN REALLY UNDERSTAND ABOUT RACISM AND DIFFERENCES?

Healthy curiosity about physical differences does not mean that young children are able to understand the effects of racism. Through age five, children interpret differences of color on a literal level and have not yet attached social meaning to these differences. For example, when a 4-year-old child is referred to as black, the child may say, "I am not black, I am brown!" At this age, children see color in varying hues and shades, not as a racial category. This in no way means the child is ashamed of being black. For biracial children, differences in skin color and other physical characteristics are evident in their families on a daily basis. Reactions or remarks from peers or strangers on the differences that bicultural children consider natural may be somewhat perplexing. This includes questions, stares or hurtful remarks. Children need assurance that differences are positive and enhancing, not negative. In order to authentically project the message that differences are positive, adults must truly believe it.

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND TO QUESTIONS ABOUT RACE AND ETHNICITY?

Respond to children's questions honestly and age appropriately. At the same time, ask yourself questions about your own possible biases and assumptions. For example, "Do I believe that multiracial children have a harder time than other children, that they are confused about who they are?" By asking yourself questions and responding honestly, you will help provide the necessary skills to guide young children toward a healthy sense of self. Our beliefs and feelings are projected through what we say and how we say it, and young children are very perceptive when it comes to detecting our true feelings.

According to Barbara Thomson, author of the anti-bias curriculum *Words Can Hurt*, we can help children learn through the language we use, and help children acquire appropriate vocabulary by asking questions. By doing this, we give voice to unspoken wondering. For example, "Would you like to touch David's hair and see how it feels? Let's ask him if it is all right." These kinds of questions stimulate more thinking than traditional questions such as, "What's that? or "How many do you have?" Modeling a vocabulary to ask questions acknowledges the children's awareness, sending the message that comments and questions are positive behaviors. Children are then able to experience language that values differences.

HANDOUT 1.2

STAGES OF RACIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Stage	Racial Self-Identification	Racial Constancy	Origin of Racial Identity	Racial Classifcation	Racial Attitudes
I. Racial Innocence Age 3	Most children are unable to accurately identify their skin color, much less their race.	Children reside in a world where anything is possible, including changes in skin color and gender.	Children are unaware of the biological origin of their skin color.	Children are unable to correctly categorize people by race.	Preschoolers are developmentally inclined to see people as individuals rather than as members of racial groups.
II. Color Awareness Ages 3-5	When asked, "What color are you?" children are just as likely to describe the color of their clothes as their skin. Children can accurately identify their skin color using words like *brown, white, tan,* and *black.* Some children also use familiar words related to food like *chocolate, peach* and *vanilla.*	Children believe that if they desire, they can change their skin color by magical means like wishing and painting.	Preschoolers believe that God, their parents, or they themselves have used magical means to produce their color.	Children can accurately group people by skin color but not by race. Children describe others in their own terms like *chocolate, vanilla, pink,* and *peach.* All light-complexioned people, including Asians, whites and blacks, are seen as "white." Children describe people as "brown" who have medium-brown complexion; "black" is used only to describe dark-skinned people.	Children are predisposed to be friendly to anyone who acts positively toward them. Children at this stage continue to see people of their own and other races without skin color and racial prejudices. However, children who are routinely taught racial bigotry begin to form negative association with certain skin colors.
III. Awakening to Social Color Ages 5-7	Children can accurately identify their skin color and begin to make relative skin-color distinctions, like *light-skinned* and *dark-skinned.* Most children are unable to reliably identify their race.	Children *begin* to perceive that their skin color is a permanent feature of their bodies and understand that the effect of the sun on the skin is only temporary.	They begin to grasp the connection between their color and their parents' and expect skin colors of family members to be similar. However, they do not yet fully comprehend the genetic basis of skin color.	Children *begin* to understand that skin color means something more than mere color, but they are inclined to categorize people by color, rather than race. They use conventional terms—*brown, black, white*—to describe people. *Black* is used to describe only brown and dark-skinned blacks and *white* to describe Asians and whites. When asked, children can identify Chinese people. Children begin to use ethnic labels, like Puerto Rican and Italian, sometimes inaccurately.	Although they do not yet fully understand them, children begin to adopt the skin-color prejudices of their family and friends as well as those presented by the media. For example, children may begin to express a preference for light or dark skin and to see "white" or "black" people as negative stereotypes.
IV. Racial Awareness Ages 8-10	Children can accurately identify their race using terms like *black* and *African American.* Some biracial children say they are "part" black or African American and "part" another race, like white.	Children comprehend that racial identity is permanent.	Children understand the genetic basis of racial identity. Unlike younger children, they understand the reason members of the same family can have different skin tones.	Children rely not only on skin color but also other physical cues, such as hair color and textures, as well as facial features to determine a person's group—white, black or African American Chinese, and so forth. As they mature, children realize that physical cues can be unreliable in determining some people's race. Children begin to also rely on more subtle cues - including social and behavioral ones – when making racial identifications.	Unless children are sensitively taught not to prejudge people based on their race, children may adopt full-fledged racial stereotypes, common in the culture and their own racial group.

Adapted from *I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla,* by Marguerite Wright

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HANDOUT 1.3

CHILDREN AND DIVERSITY

by Louise Derman-Sparks

LEARNING ABOUT RACIAL IDENTITY

Two-year-olds are curious about physical characteristics such as skin color, hair texture and eye color. They often show their interest without words—staring, touching a teacher or another child's skin or hair—observations they will verbalize as they gain language.

- **Be sensitive to twos' nonverbal signals and comments about their own and others' physical characteristics.** Respond with brief, matter-of-fact feedback. For instance, a child who notices that a character in a book is the same color as a child in the class might say: "That's Jamal!" Their teacher might then say, "The child in the book does have brown skin like Jamal's, but he is not Jamal."
- **Make wall collages and small books.** These should show all kinds of people doing all sorts of activities relevant to children's lives. Books might be themed, for instance, "Babies come in all colors."

Three and Fours wonder how they got their skin color and hair and eye characteristics, and if these characteristics will remain constant. They also begin to develop strong feelings, positive and negative, about their physical appearances.

- **Intervene when a child expresses insecurities about how he or she looks.** When Kim says, "I'm going to make my eyes blue because Sasha says my eyes are ugly," her teacher responds: "Sasha is wrong to say you have ugly eyes. It's not true and it's hurtful to say. Let's go talk to her."
- **Provide activities to help children explore their skin color and facial features.** Invite children to use skin-colored crayons to draw self-portraits on paper plates. Encourage them to use mirrors to add facial features. Tell each child that you think his or her skin color is beautiful and just right for him. Make a wall display entitled "We all are beautiful colors."
- **Provide art materials in a range of hues** to continue reinforcing positive feelings about differences.

HANDOUT 1.3, continued

Fours and Fives become increasingly aware of differences that reflect people's ethnic and racial identities. Some children may react to these differences with discomfort and hurtful behavior. Others may become aware of our society's names for different groups and wonder where they fit in your class.

- **Clarify children's questions as they arise.** Offer simple, matter-of-fact answers without over-explaining racial differences.
- **Teach non-hurtful ways to learn about racial differences.** Remind children who make fun of others' appearance—for example, someone's type of hair—that we all have different types of hair, which is usually like our parents' or grandparents' hair. Talk about and record what makes each kind of hair special. Try making portraits or puppets with different kinds of hair, using a variety of art materials.
- **Make it a group policy that it is never OK to say you won't play with someone because he or she looks different.** If this happens, intervene with comfort and support for the child who has been excluded and help him find a new group to play with. Then, think of strategies for helping the child who did the excluding to become more tolerant. You may want to include parents in forming strategies.
- **Offer ways to explore racial identity around the room.** Make sure that all your learning centers reflect different races, including art materials; images in your library; dolls, puppets and props in dramatic play; puzzles and games; and figures used in blocks. Provide mirrors so children can enjoy their own appearance.

Kindergartners can begin to understand scientific explanations for differences in skin color, hair and eyes. They can also explore the range of physical differences and similarities within racial groups. Kindergartners can also begin to understand peoples' struggles for justice and a better quality of life.

- **Help children take pride in their racial and ethnic identities.** Provide some basic information about children's heritages, languages and heroes. Encourage them to share their cultures with one another.
- **Be sensitive to children's growing awareness of being biracial or multiracial.** Display diverse images of children and adults.
- **Brainstorm solutions to racial conflicts.** Problem-solve together or make up simple rules to respond to racially discriminatory behavior.
- **Use paint swatches and skin-colored art materials to make simple charts.** Show the range of people's skin colors within different races. Make charts that include colors of hands from light to dark.

HANDOUT 1.4

HOW PREJUDICE IS LEARNED

A Ku Klux Klansman would probably argue that humans are born racially prejudiced, that prejudice is a natural state of mind everyone inherits. He would be dead wrong, however, in light of modern psychological research. Prejudice is not inherited; it is learned, first from parents and then from an ever-widening circle of people and institutions ranging from relatives to schools. One of the pioneer scholars of racial prejudice, Gordon W. Allport, found that children can learn bigotry in two basic ways: by adopting the prejudice of their parents, other family members and from the cultural environment, or by being raised in such a way that they acquire suspicions, fears and hatreds that sooner or later focus on non-dominant groups.

But the learning of prejudice is a complicated matter for children and it takes a long time. It begins with the child grasping the concept that some children are different from himself, but that is more a matter of curiosity than anything else. Children get their first hint of what prejudice really means from language, from certain powerful words loaded with emotional impact that can wound their fragile self-esteem. These words may vary from region to region depending on the ethnic composition of a particular area. In the Northeast "kike," "dago," "wop" or "spick" might be examples; in the South "nigger," "cracker" or "redneck" might produce the same reaction. But it takes children time to learn to whom these words refer and to completely understand their parents' rejection and hatred of those categories of people. Children often begin by using these emotional words without understanding to whom they apply or why they trigger such strong reactions.

The next learning stage may take place between the ages of about seven through eleven and is characterized by the child's rejection of those who are the objects of the parents' prejudices. In this stage, Allport and other researchers found, the child tends to go overboard. If blacks are the hated category then the child blindly condemns all blacks, viewing them all as having no good qualities, no redeeming features. The prejudiced child at this stage, often around the fifth grade, has mastered the proper bigoted phrases, even if they still hasn't quite given up a fairly democratic style of behavior toward the hated category.

A child at this point often says harshly bigoted things but may still play with children of the group they are talking against. It takes the child another few years to learn to modify their total verbal rejection into something more realistic and easier to rationalize and defend.

At this stage the child, now a teenager, no longer claims all people of the hated category have no good features and is willing to concede them some good attributes. But the behavior of the prejudiced young person at this point begins to harden into the familiar pattern of adult bigotry that is shared by their parents or family circle.

In short, it takes the entire period of childhood and much of adolescence to master prejudice.

Adapted from *A World of Difference*, Anti Defamation League.

HANDOUT 1.5

SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING POSITIVE RACIAL ATTITUDES

1) Initiate activities and discussions to build a positive racial and cultural self-identity.

2) Initiate activities and discussions to develop positive attitudes toward racial and cultural groups different from the child's.

3) When a child asks questions about race and culture, always answer when the questions are asked.

4) Listen carefully—in a manner that seems relaxed—to children's questions and comments. Make sure you understand what the child means and wants to know.

5) Pay attention to feelings. Find out what is involved in the questions or comments.

6) Provide truthful explanations appropriate to the child's level of understanding.

7) Help children explore their own ideas, giving them support for their efforts.

8) Help children recognize stereotypes.

9) Encourage children to challenge racism by your own example and give them skills appropriate to their age.

10) Cultivate the understanding that racism does not have to be a permanent condition—that people can work together to create change.

OVERHEAD 1.1

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

- Physical characteristics
- Family philosophy
- Community of residence
- School and peer group pressure
- Social and economic background
- Relationships with extended family

OVERHEAD 1.2

STAGES OF RACIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Racial Innocence
ages Birth to 3

Racial/Cultural Awareness of Differences
ages 3 – 5

Awakening to Social Awareness
ages 5 – 7

Racial Awareness
ages 7 – 10

2

Identifying and Responding

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IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES OF BIRACIAL CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

RATIONALE

There is no one approach that applies to working with multiracial families: one size does not fit all. The varying circumstances of each family are to be considered when determining the most effective approach to working with the family and the child. Many factors influence the way biracial and multiethnic children view themselves in the world:

- family philosophy,
- the child's physical characteristics,
- relationship to extended family,
- the community of residence, and
- socio-economic status.

It is important to support the right of individual choice without imposing your values or opinions.

To best serve multiethnic children, there are numerous resources available with current and accurate information on race and ethnicity. This includes articles, multicultural curricula, bibliographies of books, online resources and videos. Without accurate information, it is possible to misread a situation with the child or family and respond in a manner that is insensitive and disrespectful. Working from assumptions or misinformation can be harmful and in some instances, hurtful.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES OF BIRACIAL CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Processing dual identities
- Possible conflicts or being cut off from extended family
- Biases and assumptions from peers and community
- Possible lack of support from family and community
- Not prepared for racism, or how the wide society views them in comparison to how they self-identify
- If the child is transracially adopted, then all of the above issues as well as typical issues regarding adoption are exacerbated by the racial and ethnic difference.
- Child-rearing differences between each culture

continued

TIME

60 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Identify the factors that contribute to the varying perspectives and identity choices of biracial children.
- Identify strategies that support the choices of the family without imposing one's own beliefs and values.
- Help children feel comfortable with differences.
- Access current and accurate information on biracial children and families and use this information to better understand and work with multiracial families.
- Offer parents information, resources and support.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. Flip chart and markers
2. p. 30 Handout 2.1: *Mixed: A Poem*
   p. 31 Handout 2.2: *Biracial and Multicultural Children Speak Out*
   p. 34 Handout 2.3: *The Anatomy of an Identity Crisis*
   p. 36 Handout 2.4: *Shades of History*
   p. 38 Handout 2.5: *Parenting Biracial Children*
   p. 39 Handout 2.6: *Sample Intake Form for Learning About Families' Identity*
   p. 40 Handout 2.6: *Sample Children's Center Enrollment Interview Form*
   p. 42 Overhead 2.1: *Unique Experiences of Biracial and Multiethnic Children*

continued

TEACHING METHODS/SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have participants read Handout 2.2: *Biracial and Multicultural Children Speak Out*, Handout 2.3: *The Anatomy of an Identity Crisis*, Handout 2.4: *Shades of History* and Handout 2.5: *Parenting Biracial Children* prior to discussion.
- Read Handout 2.1: *Mixed* out loud to begin discussion.
- Brainstorm with participants to identify and list the unique needs of mixed-race children and their families, and how they compare to families of one ethnicity. Participants may share personal experiences that relate to the topic.
- As a group, develop strategies for working with the family that support and respect their choices, while enhancing a strong sense of self of the child. Refer to Handout 2.2: *Biracial and Multicultural Children Speak Out*, where the authors recommend that biracial children be viewed as having two cultural backgrounds, supporting the child's need to identify with each parent. Use this belief as a basis for discussion on how to be respectful of the family's choices, even if they are in opposition to one's own.
- Brainstorm (or divide into small groups which then report back to the whole group) to list resources and materials they have used in working with issues of race and ethnicity. Review available resources such as bibliographies, online resources, videos and current articles.
- Use samples of the intake form and Handout 2.6: *Sample Intake Form for Learning About Families' Identity* to illustrate the variety of tools available, and how having access to accurate information contributes to quality child care environments that support the unique needs of biracial children.
- Allow time for questions and answers.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

a. In presenting information on this subject area, stress the importance of not imposing values and opinions, to listen rather than judge.

b. Refer to statistics in the introduction to remind participants of the rise in interracial marriages, transracial adoptions and numbers of children adopted from the foster care system.

HANDOUT 2.1

MIXED

by Monique August

I am Mixed
Do not call me black, I am not black
Do not call me brown, I am not brown
Do not call me red, I am not red
Do not call me yellow, I am not yellow
Do not call me white, I am not white

Do not call Me anything except my name
For I am Mixed, and you could not possibly guess What I am,
Let alone Who I am

I am Mixed, Mulatto, Mestiza
African American, Mexican, Native American, Asian, Caucasian
To categorize Me into one,
Would cause Me to deny my true heritage
To categorize Me into one,
Would cause Me to deny my ancestors, my cultures, my origins, and my true identity
I identify myself as a person, by my name
Not by my race, or the color of my skin

I am Mixed
Proud to be Mixed
Proud to have the history of various cultures in Me
Proud to have the struggles, atrocities, and triumphs of various cultures within Me
Proud to know and be educated about my different cultures
Proud to be Mixed
Proud to be Me
My origins run deep

HANDOUT 2.2

BIRACIAL AND MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN SPEAK OUT

Interviews conducted by Paula Gerstenblatt

MELANIA

17-year-old high school senior; mother is Jewish, father is Nicaraguan

When parents agree to raise you in both cultures, being bicultural is not a problem. My father tries to participate in Judaism. My mother's influence in terms of religion is the strongest, but I grew up with Spanish in the house since both my parents speak fluent Spanish. As a child, I spoke Spanish. My father was not religious in Nicaragua, so he is not very religious here. My mother's father was a Cantor, so we have been raised Jewish.

At school most of my friends are bl...k. As a person I do not feel I really fit in any one place so I can go anywhere I want and get away with it. When people look at me they see me as white. Latinos accept me but I cannot hang with them exclusively, that's not who I am. They define themselves as "Chicano-Latino" only. It is segregated at my school, but I go in and out. To me racism is the fear of the unknown, so I try not to have fear or racist thoughts.

I never really bonded with white kids other than Jewish kids. I went to a bilingual school for kindergarten through second grade, then at my next elementary school most of my friends were Asian.

I went to Israel last summer, and it was not really a moving experience for me because it was a tour and too touristy. Last summer I went to the Dominican Republic with the Amigos program and just two students were in this small village. I liked that much better than being with the large group.

> "I grew up around both traditions. They are harmonized inside of me and, in fact, that makes me special."
>
> Melania

JEAN

14-year-old high school freshman; mother is Japanese, father is Hispanic

My mom is Japanese and my dad is Hispanic and white. I don't speak either Japanese or Spanish well, but I am taking Japanese in school. Most of my friends are Chinese, and there are lots of Asians at my school. People don't see me as white.

Are you white? Sort of. I identify with Asians, but they are mainly Chinese. My friends are mostly concerned with grades and are mostly Chinese. Most of the popular kids dress like Teen Magazine and are obsessed with boys. Most of the Hispanic and black kids come from East Palo Alto, and are mainly friends with each other. There is a Club Asian Pride at school that my friends think is silly; they all dress the same. Most of my friends are Chinese, or act Chinese, which is to say they care about grades. That is a cultural value, not because of race.

HANDOUT 2.2, continued

On my father's side, our Hispanic roots are from Jews who left Spain during the Inquisition and migrated to South America by way of Portugal and the Caribbean. My father was born in Costa Rica. On my mother's side, my great-grandmother and grandmother were in the internment camps during World War II.

Identity issues are confusing, like with forms that categorize you or which one you identify with. I leave it blank. Sometimes I worry about it, but right now it is not that important. It might be if I lived somewhere else—in places where there is less diversity and people have biases because of less information. Being of different cultures is more interesting. I wonder how my ancestors of 300 years ago would feel if they met each other. I don't know how open-minded they would be; the Japanese had no exposure to white people.

I have been asked if I am Chinese and when I say that I am half Japanese, they say they thought I was half something. If I had been born of one culture I would see things differently. I am proof that people can get along even if their ancestors are completely different. I might not believe that if I hadn't seen it for myself.

JONATHAN

14-year-old high school freshman; mother is white, father is black

I see myself as black and my religion is Jewish. I don't think of myself as biracial. Even though I see myself as black, I feel very connected to being Jewish and my mother's Jewish family. Most of my friends are black but I have other friends too. People see me as black, but people who know me also know that I am very Jewish. People who don't know me just see me as black. I have traveled to Greece and France and have friends from different countries as well.

HANDOUT 2.2, continued

HANNAH

17-year-old high school senior; mother is white, father is Japanese

Since I was 4 years old I have been interested in the Japanese culture. I was tutored in Japanese because my dad does not speak Japanese. He is very Americanized and not in touch with his culture. My dad is a math professor and my mom is a clothes designer. We had relatives who came over from Japan to visit and they were impressed with my ability to speak Japanese. They were wondering, "Who is this tall, curly-haired white girl speaking Japanese?" People don't look at me and think I am Japanese; they think I am mixed, with Latino. People always ask what I am, and other than the fact that I have tiny feet despite my height, and my underbite, which is also common in Japanese people, I do not look Japanese.

I sometimes regretted not having just one cultural identity, as some of my other friends have. My two closest friends since elementary school are Latino and black. My only negative feelings about being mixed are that I never really feel I belong. Physically, I am out of place in the Asian clubs, and physically I fit in at Latino clubs. I am a member of Hapa, which is for biracial/bicultural people.

> "Who is this tall, curly-haired white girl speaking Japanese?"
>
> Hannah

With white kids I feel like I am trying to explain to them about other cultures. They will say things in my presence that they would say with all white kids; they see me as white.

I do think that growing up in Berkeley, California is the best place for being biracial/bicultural. I was in the Amigos program this summer in the Dominican Republic and I met a biracial girl who lived in a white community—she had never met another black or Asian kid before.

Growing up here, I have never felt intimidated being mixed. When people ask me what I am, I say Japanese and white. I think there should be a category for biracial/bicultural people. I am not one or the other, and it feels as if you are selling yourself short not to include both.

HANDOUT 2.3

THE ANATOMY OF AN IDENTITY CRISIS

by Canh Oxelson

I don't ever remember my family telling me that I was adopted. Being half-black and half-Vietnamese while growing up in a Swedish and Irish family in the San Joaquin Valley made it all pretty obvious. Talk about an identity crisis! At first glance into a mirror, it's easy to see my mixed heritage; my eyes certainly come from my Vietnamese mother and my lips definitely come from my black American father. I'm tall like my father must have been and I'm light-skinned like my mother probably was. Even my doctor says that a history of ankle injuries is probably the result of small joints like my mother and long ligaments like my father.

Unfortunately, I will never know for sure, as my biological parents are lost to me. Being half-black and half-Vietnamese, I am still learning what it means to be either but especially both. Having been grafted to the family tree of my adoptive family, I enjoy Irish and Swedish cultural traditions at home. Traveling and studying in Germany as a high school exchange student further broadened my exposure to a European way of living. My parents met each other in South America and their love for Latin culture is obvious to anyone who visits our home. In fact, I'm the only one in my family who doesn't speak Spanish! Growing up in the San Joaquin Valley, a region rich in Mexican-American tradition, exposed me to still more dynamic experiences.

> "Who I was seemed to be in constant conflict with who my friends thought I should be."
>
> Canh Oxelson

Most importantly, my return to Vietnam helped me discover my Asian heritage and build pride in my bicultural and biracial background. Gradually coming to terms with this multiethnic environment and struggling to define my identity within it has taught me to embrace my own marginality in a way that I could never have imagined during my adolescent years. While I was growing up, I was never quite sure who I was. The world around me saw me as being black, which also means that I was subject to the stereotypes that people have had about black Americans. Even though I look black, I didn't talk or walk like the black kids I knew at school. I didn't have the same cultural and family traditions they did. My personal world was a white, middle-class experience that didn't always fit with what I thought should be a part of me. Who I thought I should be was in constant conflict with who I really was.

At the same time, I never felt as though my white friends truly understood my thoughts and feelings or that my black friends ever fully embraced me. To make matters worse, because most saw me as being black, my Asian heritage wasn't even acknowledged by those around me! Who I was seemed to be in constant conflict with who my friends thought I should be.

HANDOUT 2.3, continued

My struggle for identity began early and it was a painful one as I sought my place in a confusing world. I found myself being defiant in the face of what my parents asked of me. I acted out and instead of facing and negotiating my confusion, there were times when I would withdraw and spend as much time on my own as I could. My parents loved me immeasurably, but it takes a village to raise a child and they constantly put me into positions where I would have guidance and encouragement.

THE TIGER WOODS FACTOR

In the spring of 1999, I spent four days with Tiger Woods on the set of a commercial for American Express. While our golf games could best be described as "dissimilar," Tiger and I have shared very similar experiences as bicultural adults. In a society that often makes you choose one culture to call your own, we had each sought a balanced reaction to our bicultural roots.

During a break in the commercial shoot, Tiger and I got a chance to hit a few golf balls. After watching me shank two drives into the ocean and wound a small animal with a third, Tiger proceeded to step up and out-drive me by at least 150 yards. This seemed like a good time for me to change the subject and we began to talk a little about our common experiences. To the casual observer, Tiger Woods seems to be very well-adjusted to his African-American and Thai background. He is an outstanding and balanced role model. However, he admitted to me that he's had an advantage over other people with similar biracial backgrounds. As someone who has grown up in the sports spotlight, Tiger explained that he was able to identify himself as an elite golfer more so than either black or Asian. I, too, had used athletics as a way to build an identity. For others, finding that balance between cultural identities may be easier said than done and after finally retiring from competitive swimming, I had to keep looking for ways to unpack all that emotional baggage.

Although my life experiences are certainly unique, all of us share the quest of discovering who we are and where we belong in our worlds. My struggle for identity culminated in a return to my homeland and my return to Vietnam showed me that I am my mother AND my father, both adoptive and biological. I'm an orphan, an athlete, a scholar, the adopted son of two wonderful people and the adopted brother of two loving sisters. I am black, I am yellow, I am white and I am Canh.

HANDOUT 2.4

SHADES OF HISTORY

by Joan Ryan

I am whiter than typing paper. My husband has olive skin. And our son is brown. He is part Hawai'ian, a heritage he embraces as if it bestowed on him special status in the world. He has a Hawaiian middle name, Iokepa. He learned how to pronounce "humuhumunukunukuapua'a" long before I did, and keeps a drawing of this Hawai'ian fish on his bedroom wall. He considers his dark skin an emblem of his Hawai'ian roots, and of course he lords it over me when I'm gingerly applying aloe cream to my latest sunburn.

When he was younger, he identified not only with Hawai'ians but with anyone with dark skin. He didn't seem to notice the various shades of darkness. After playing with his friend Anthony one day, my son mentioned that he and Anthony had the same skin. Anthony is African American.

Not long after that day, when Ryan was 4 years old, he and I were reading a picture book about Abraham Lincoln. When we reached the part about slavery, Ryan placed his hand on the page so I couldn't turn it. He was transfixed. He asked why Americans treated the African people like that.

I tried to explain how white people had used their power and prejudice to enslave black people for free labor. My son persisted. He didn't understand why only Africans were slaves and not white people. I said that many Americans believed they were superior to people with black skin.

> "All he saw was the horror inflicted on black people, and he wanted no part of it."

"I'm not black," Ryan said suddenly.

He was distancing himself from the dark-skinned people in the book. For the first time, he was making the distinction between his skin and theirs. He had little concept of how long ago slavery was. All he saw was the horror inflicted on black people, and he wanted no part of it.

This was not the lesson I had hoped he would draw from the book.

I began to wonder what other bits of information—from books, TV, sporting events—my son was absorbing that were shaping his views on race.

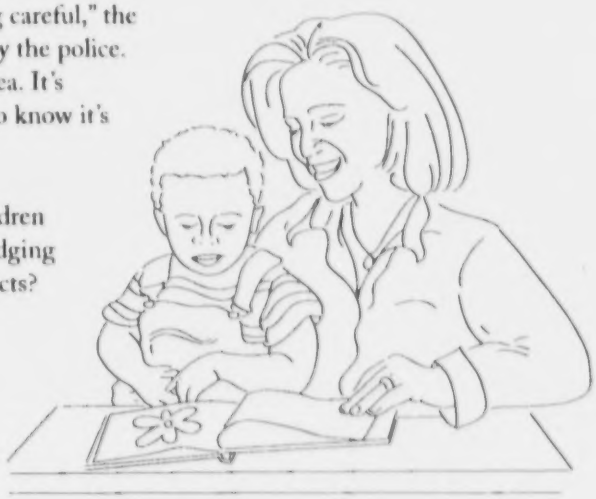
And I wondered what to do as a parent to keep all that information in some context. By reading about slavery, for example, had I unwittingly planted the idea that there was something fundamentally different, even wrong, with people with black skin?

HANDOUT 2.4, continued

Anthony's father, Rodney, says he and his wife downplay the issue of race in their house, despite the fact that they are one of the few black families in their neighborhood and local school. But when Rodney had a business trip to Memphis a couple years go, he took his son—then 6 years old—along so they could visit the civil rights museum. They sat at a lunch counter, boarded a bus, studied photographs of children who look like Anthony being mistreated at the hands of white people. "What Anthony kept saying to me was, 'That was really mean. That wasn't fair.' Rodney said, "We used the experience as an opportunity to discuss on a broad basis the importance of treating people fairly."

Anthony's parents believe that if they don't draw distinctions about skin color in their everyday lives, their children won't, either. Yet...

"What I am dreading is the discussion about being careful," the father said. "What to do when you're pulled over by the police. That's what scares me, because Anthony has no idea. It's happened to me seven or eight times, and he has to know it's different when you're black."



That's it, right there: How do we instill in our children the ideal that color doesn't matter, while acknowledging this nation's shameful history and its lingering effects?

Sunday, September 20, 1998
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HANDOUT 2.5

PARENTING BIRACIAL CHILDREN

AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE

by Stacy Thompson

One evening while my husband and I were having dinner with our two young sons, my 3-year-old son got up and walked over to me. He put his hand next to his father's and mine asking, "You're black, Dad is white. What am I?"

It was this question that led me to ask myself how would we teach my sons to define their identity and to articulate that identity to the world.

My first thought was to teach him that he is African American because, after all, that is how society would view him. Their father objected because that identification is not only incorrect, but it would deny his children of his European heritage. It would imply that our children are not equally a member of his race as they are of mine. We decided on the biracial identification.

There have been several times in my sons' road to identity formation when they would switch from calling themselves biracial to calling themselves African American to saying they were white. There was a time that they both wanted straight hair like their dad. I supported these fluctuations because I realized, according to Maria Root, it is a normal aspect of biracial identity formation. Though sometimes painful, I knew I needed to support them through the process.

I discovered a group called I-Pride (Interracial/Intercultural Pride). This organization was created to provide support for interracial families and to educate the public about multiracial issues. Our family attended a few functions and then became members. We met and became friends with other families that looked like ours. I joined the board of directors and soon after became president of that organization, serving in that capacity for four years.

I have been active in the movement to allow my sons to embrace both of their heritages. This includes extensive involvement through testimony at the Office of Management and Budget hearings. Those hearings led to Census 2000's "check all that apply" designation.

My sons are now teenagers. I believe that the combination of having parents who support their identiy formation, belonging to a support group, and living in a community that has a large population of multi-racial young adults, have all contributed to the positive biracial identity my children now have. My oldest son is the president of a biracial teen group, Generation Pride. He has presented at a national multiracial conference, and has recently been a contributing author.

It is their time now to continue what I have begun. It is their responsibility to continue to raise the consciousness of others around this issue.

HANDOUT 2.6

SAMPLE INTAKE FORM FOR LEARNING ABOUT FAMILIES' IDENTITY

COLLEGE OF MARIN CHILDREN'S CENTER ENROLLMENT INTERVIEW FORM

It is our goal at the Children's Center to work together with parents and families to deeply support and nurture the development of each child. The more we understand about the circumstances and experiences that are impacting each child, the more fully we can meet that child's individual and unique needs. The questions on this form are designed to gather information about both your child's personal and cultural history so that we can truly honor the life journeys of the children in our care.

The transition for a child from the foundation of his/her family into the extended environment of school is an important and challenging one. Thus, we are asking you questions about the significant people in your child's life, about eating and sleeping patterns at home, about your child's emotional and social development, about your child's ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity. The information you give us will help us to understand and respond more sensitively to your child from the very beginning of his/her experience at the Children's Center. We are honored to be a part of your child's life in these formative years.

The first five years of life are a critical and precious time in the development of a child's self-esteem and self-identity. It is also the time during which children begin to develop their own racial, cultural and linguistic awareness. Race, language and culture connect children to their families and history. They are an integral part of a child's identity and self-esteem. At the Center, each family's culture is seen as a gift that can profoundly enrich the lives of all of us. These early years are a wonderful time for the learning of languages. We want to support all families in the maintaining of their home languages while helping each child to develop an appreciation of and interest in learning other languages.

Source: *A Place to Begin*. California Tomorrow, Oakland, CA

HANDOUT 2.6, CONTINUED

SAMPLE CHILDREN'S CENTER ENROLLMENT INTERVIEW FORM

If a child lives in two households, give each household a copy of the form to fill out.

Child's Name _____ Nickname _____ Sex _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____ Today's Date _____

Parent's/Guardian's Name(s) _____

Child is: Biological _____ Adopted _____ Foster _____ Guardian _____

Family and Home: *There is no one more important to children than the people in their family. Knowing more about the special people in your child's life and what is important at home will help us be more responsive to your child.*

Members of Household	Relationship to Child	Age	Does child have a special name for this person?

If either of the parents do not live with the child, please describe the child's relationship with that parent, such as how often the child sees that parent, if at all; other members of this parent's household; child's experience transitioning from one household to another, etc.

Are there other significant people in your child's life that you would like us to be aware of? If so, please describe their relationship to your child and what your child calls them.

Are there holidays, traditions, or special occasions your family celebrates? If so, what are they? Would you be interested in sharing them with us in the Center?

Do you have favorite music your family likes to listen to at home? If so, what is it?

How do you describe your child's ethnicity?

Does your child have any difficulty describing himself/herself in the same way? If so, what is the difficulty?

Is there anything you would like the staff to be aware of in relation to your child's ethnic identity?

What is the primary language spoken in your home?

Are there other languages spoken in your home? What are they? By whom?

What are your goals in relation to your child's language development? Do you have any questions or concerns about this?

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HANDOUT 2.6, continued

SAMPLE ENROLLMENT INTERVIEW FORM, PAGE 2

If you speak a language other than English, can you write down some words which are important to your child in your language, including the following words, so that we can use them in the classroom?

Hello _____ Goodbye _____ Thank you _____

One _____ Two _____ Three _____ Four _____ Five _____

Important words:

Please describe how you know when your child needs to use the toilet. What words does your child say to ask to use the toilet?

Emotional and Social Behavior
How does your child express feelings of pleasure, excitement or joy?

How do you discipline your child?

Has your child been cared for by people other than you? If so, by whom and when?

What are your hopes for your child's development in our program?

Anything else you would like us to know:

Napping
Where does your child sleep at home?

In own bed ____ In bed with siblings ____ In family bed ____ Other ____

Medical and Nutrition Information
Are there any foods your child cannot eat because of religious or cultural traditions?

What is a regular mealtime like in your home? (Any rituals or traditions associated with the meal? Who eats together? Where?)

What are some of your child's favorite foods?

What are some foods eaten in your home that are part of your cultural heritage?

Adapted from *A Place to Begin.* California Tomorrow, Oakland, CA.

OVERHEAD 2.1

THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES OF BIRACIAL AND MULTIETHNIC CHILDREN

- Processing more than one ethnic and racial identity
- Biases and assumptions from peers and community
- Possible lack of support from family and community
- May not be prepared for racism, or how the wider society views them compared to how they view themselves
- Feeling pressure to choose one identity
- Ability to travel in more than one culture
- Change of identity depending on developmental stage
- If the child is transracially adopted, then consider all of the above in addition to typical issues regarding adoption.

3

Racial and Cultural Labeling

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RACIAL AND CULTURAL LABELING

RATIONALE

Historically, society has imposed racial and ethnic labels and categories on multiracial people. In recent years, however, this notion has been debated and challenged, including the emergence of an advocacy movement that has successfully campaigned to allow people to identify as more than one race on official forms.

As a child care provider, an understanding of the significance of this issue is critical to fostering a mutually respectful relationship with the family which recognizes the right of each family to make its own choices. Identity is an emerging concept for biracial children, one that may change as they pass through different developmental stages, requiring child care providers to practice an inclusive and flexible approach.

TIME

30 - 45 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Be aware of the history of racial labeling and how it impacts dual heritage children.
- Identify their biases and assumptions.
- Identify the personal choice of families, with the understanding that there are divergent viewpoints on this subject and that it can be emotionally charged.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. p. 47 Handout 3.1: *Checking the Box: Labeling Biracial Children*
   p. 49 Handout 3.2: *Challenging the Need for Racial Labels*
   p. 52 Handout 3.3: *Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People*
   p. 53 Handout 3.4: *Maybe He Should Choose Black*
   p. 54 Handout 3.5: *The Experiences of Mixed-Race People*
2. Flip chart and markers
3. VCR and monitor
4. Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*

continued

TEACHING METHODS/SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have participants read Handout 3.1: *Checking the Box: Labeling Biracial Children*, Handout 3.2: *Challenging the Need for Racial Labels*, Handout 3.4: *Maybe He Should Choose Black*, and Handout 3.5: *The Experiences of Mixed-Race People* prior to discussion.
- Discuss the changing demographics and how this shift is challenging previously held notions on racial and ethnic labels.
- Discuss historical content of labeling and census issues as referred to in all four handouts.
- Brainstorm labels participants have heard, and invite them to share how they feel about them and discuss where they come from.
- Review Handout 3.3: *Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People.* Break into small groups and discuss.
- Allow time for questions and answers. This discussion should not take place if you do not have at least 15 to 20 minutes to discuss the issues. It is too emotional and controversial for less time.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

a. Carefully frame the discussion to acknowledge the diversity of experience and viewpoints, stressing respect for others.

b. Mixed-race children have a range of identity choices. Biases steeped in historical patterns of racism can be unfairly imposed on biracial children. For example, society tends to label children in the same category as the non-white parent, yet this denies the heritage of the white parent. If both parents are non-white, then the child's racial and ethnic identity is assumed to be with the parent the child most closely resembles physically.

c. There is no right answer or approach to this issue, and there is a need for reflection and knowledge for a responsible communication and decision making.

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Handout 3.1

CHECKING THE BOX: LABELING BIRACIAL CHILDREN

A commonly asked question of multiracial children is "What are you?" This can be perplexing for a young child, particularly if the family has not addressed the issues of racial and ethnic identity. A child's ability to answer the question, "What are you?" depends on his or her age and stage of development. When parents and child care providers respond to questions and comments about a child's racial and ethnic identity, the developmental stage is the most important consideration. Understandably, the older children are, the greater their ability to respond with a strong sense of who they are.

Historically, society has imposed racial and ethnic labels on bicultural people. The child's racial and ethnic identity is most commonly assumed to be that of the non-white parent. If both parents are non-white, but of different ethnicity, then the child's identity is assumed to be that of the parent they most closely resemble. This practice dates back to the period of slavery, when white slave masters fathered children with female slaves, who were considered property of the slave owners. After slavery was abolished, laws were passed to prevent intermarriage, laws that also decreed persons with any black ancestry were black, known as the "one drop rule." In 1967, the Supreme Court voted that all laws prohibiting interracial marriages were unconstitutional, though acceptance of the "one drop rule" continued. To better understand the historical context and the present-day manifestation of these practices, an excellent book to read is *Slaves in the Family* by Edward Ball.

The controversy surrounding this racial legacy triggers painful reminders of our nation's past. In many instances, biracial children are physically indistinguishable from children with parents from the same race or ethnicity. The sociological phenomenon that separates these two groups of children is a first generation white parent and a voluntary union between the parents. The notion of pure race is a myth, and fast becoming outdated.

By some estimates, 80 percent of African Americans have at least some European ancestry, and a quarter have some Native American ancestry. Many Americans have a legitimate claim to being biracial, due to

HANDOUT 3.1, continued

either voluntary or involuntary unions. However, having parents and extended family from different racial and ethnic backgrounds creates new and different variables for children to contend with in a society that continues to use racial and ethnic categories as a means of division.

Be sure to ask yourself questions regarding your beliefs and values. Respecting the choice to raise a child with a bicultural identity is the same as respecting any other cultural belief and practice. If you do not agree with and cannot support a family's choices, then be honest with yourself and them about your views. Open discussion and dialogue, if conducted in a way that is considerate of all involved, are helpful ways to bridge differences.

DO MULTIETHNIC CHILDREN CHOOSE ONE IDENTITY, OR DO THEY CHANGE AS THEY GET OLDER?

Multiethnic children are challenging previously held notions of race and culture, and how we as a society categorize and label people. Identity is an emerging and changing dynamic for mixed-race children, depending on their developmental stage and numerous other factors such as physical appearance, relationships with extended family, the racial and ethnic makeup of the community in which they live, the family's income, educational level and philosophy regarding racial and ethnic identity. The ability to travel comfortably in more than one world is a tremendous advantage, allowing for a broadened view of the world which includes many possibilities. As a child care provider, recognizing this trait as an asset rather than a liability, and supporting the right of each family and child to make choices independently of society's expectations and biases, enhances the child's sense of self and offers validation of who he or she is.

Handout 3.2

CHALLENGING THE NEED FOR RACIAL LABELS

by Francis Wardle, Ph.D., Director, Center for the Study of Biracial Children

The battle for the rights of multiethnic/multiracial children and their parents, and multiethnic/multiracial individuals, has many fronts. One of these is the right to accurately select a category on the census, schools forms, and all government forms, from employment applications to college entrance documents. However, despite the claims of the media and many academics and civil rights activities, this is not the only battlefront of the movement, and in my mind, not the most important. But it is the most publicized, and thus has created the most controversy and opposition.

Now that the census "allows" people of mixed identity to select more than one category, and supposedly other federal forms, including school forms, will begin to reflect this change starting January 1, 2003, the arguments have shifted. Two of the most contested are: is it OK for the government to take Census 2000 data and collapse it back into the original single-race categories for civil rights compliance (which they are doing); and should the multiracial community still seek a multiracial category? Another argument, hidden in most of the rhetoric, is whether we should eliminate the categories altogether. (It is interesting to note that before the civil rights legislation that created protected minority groups, the American Civil Liberties Union proposed getting rid of the racial categories, which they viewed as an artifact of our racist past). Finally, there is the question of how all the number crunchers of this country (academics and statisticians who adore hard data) will use the statistics from the census.

> "Interracial and interethnic children are going to be challenged by other children. They are so physically different. They are going to be asked who they are...They need to be proud of who they are. They need to know that you are proud of who they are."
>
> Francis. Wardle Ph.D

These issues aren't simply academic struggles or excuses to publish a slew of academic books. The other day I noticed a Martin Luther King display at the community college where I teach. The first-place prize for a diveristy poster, by a first-grader, was a collage made out of construction paper of five people representing white, African American, Hispanic, Asian American and American Indian groups. And, yes, the white person's face was made from white paper, the African American's from black paper, the Hispanic's from brown paper, the Asian's from yellow paper, and the American Indian's face from red construction paper! Just the other day a college student e-mailed me with a dilemma: her college professor required her students to develop school-communication strategies for African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics and Asians. This student wanted to do something for mixed-race students, but couldn't find a place for this increasing number of students. She wanted to include them under the African-American category,

HANDOUT 3.2, continued

which produced a negative response from me, because many multiracial children are not black/white, and because black/white children logically don't fit under the African-American category any more than under the white category. And, finally, as an educator I look at lots of college textbooks. While almost all of them provide materials on "diverse cultures," they rarely have anything for people of mixed heritage, and when they do they always give an argument as to why these children really belong with their group of color. Our teachers, sociologists and psychologists receive no training for working with diverse mixed-race students and parents. This is a tremendous disservice to our children.

Census 2000 counted almost 7 million people who viewed their identity as more than a single race or ethnicity. And many of these were children. The reality is twofold: 1) the number of biracial, multiracial and multiethnic people in this country continues to increase and 2) more people in this country are choosing to identify with a multiethnic or multiracial identity, although this figure is a very low count, because many multiethnic/multiracial people still classify themselves with a single race or ethnicity, due to the persistence of the one-drop rule, and the accusation by activists that embracing a multiracial heritage is disloyal and unacceptable from a group identity and cultural survival perspective. Further, others are simply comfortable remaining within society's traditional racial and ethnic categories. As a result of this traditional shift, several observations are in order:

- Using census data for any studies that use race/ethnic groups as variables, without considering people who choose more than one identity, renders the results of the research totally useless;
- Presenting conferences, books and college classes on diversity and multicultural education without including multiethnic and multiracial children and people is disingenuous, and academically dishonest;
- Placing group racial politics above the rights of individuals to self-identify challenges the fundamental view of individual rights in this country;
- Allowing academics and a few political leaders to dictate to United States citizens what they can and cannot do regarding their individual personal identity, and how their government will recognize their identity, is tantamount to dictatorship;
- Using the number of people who selected more than one category on the census as a true reflection of our mixed-race population is academic fraud, and shows a complete lack of understanding about race in this county;
- Recognizing that the old racial and ethnic categories no longer work requires us to find fairer and more effective ways to address past and present inequalities and discrimination.

Clearly we need to continually address issues of equality and discrimination. But we cannot do this at the expense of the basic right of individuals to determine their own racial, ethnic and cultural self-identity. It makes no sense to say Tiger Woods can play on any golf course he chooses, but cannot choose his own identity!

HANDOUT 3.2, continued

Cleary an apartheid-created color hierarchy such as was used in South Africa does not work. Further, the scourge of racism exists in all countries of the world, including Brazil, which has a far more advanced approach to acknowledging the rich diversity of mixed-race people than we do. Neither of these realities changes the basic argument that in the United States adults and children should be allowed to self-select on official forms—including a multiracial category, if they so choose—and more importantly, to decide on their own sense of personal identity and heritage. Further, their government should accurately report those selections, and not morph them into some kind of official government report—what we in research call "altering data," which is considered highly unethical!

Where we go from here is open, and subject to much heated debate. While this is healthy, we must make sure multiracial/multiethnic people and parents trying sincerely to raise healthy biracial children have a strong voice in the debate and not let self-appointed leaders and academics—who have easy access to publications—dominate the debate on this critical issue. Fundamentally we must assert that the right of individuals to their own self-identity supercedes all other interests, including the wish of the governments to categorize, collect and sort demographic data. Maybe the net result of this debate will be what some people fear and many of us want: a challenge to the entire process of racial labeling, and the selection of the ultimate category: human being.

HANDOUT 3.3

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR RACIALLY MIXED PEOPLE

I HAVE THE RIGHT...

Not to justify my existence in this world.

Not to keep the races separate within me.

Not to be responsible for people's discomfort with my physical ambiguity.

Not to justify my ethnic legitimacy.

I HAVE THE RIGHT...

To identify myself differently than strangers expect me to identify.

To identify myself differently from how my parents identify me.

To identify myself differently from my brothers and sisters.

To identify myself differently in different situations.

I HAVE THE RIGHT...

To create a vocabulary to communicate about being multiracial.

To change my identity over my lifetime - and more than once.

To have loyalties and identification with more than one group of people.

To freely choose whom I befriend and love.

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HANDOUT 3.4

"MAYBE HE SHOULD CHOOSE BLACK"

As an exercise one day in my third-grade social studies class, we filled out teacher-made, sample census forms. It was the first personal-information form I ever filled out for myself. When I got to the race section, the choices were White, Black, American Indian, Hispanic/Mexican, Oriental, and Other. I asked my teacher how many boxes we were allowed to mark in the race category. She told me to mark only one box. Then I pointed at my friend, whose mother was white and father was Black, and asked, "Well, what about Aaron? What box does he fill out?" All eyes in the class were on Aaron. My poor friend was horrified that I had used him as the example, but he waited curiously with the class for our teacher's answer.

"Oh, I don't know. He can choose white, or Black, or Other if he can't decide which he wants to be. He's dark like his dad, so maybe he should choose Black." "Maybe you should have a box for Zebra!" snapped one of our classmates.

Fearing having to face the same humiliation as my friend, I did not dare to mention my personal reasons for asking the question. Both of my mother's grandmothers were Native Americans from south Texas and both grandfathers were African-American. My father's father was a Cuban whose family had settled in western Louisiana, where he met and married my grandmother, a Creole (with a mixed heritage of French, Spanish, Native American, and African).

> "Maybe you should have a box for Zebra."

Unlike Aaron, I did not look more like one parent than the other. So I thought about my neighborhood, my church and my mother's family (the side with whom I was close) and decided that if I had to be one, Black it was. I put an "x" in the Black box and proceeded.

At home that afternoon, I explained to my mother what had happened in class and the decision I had made. She hugged me and assured me that my decision to choose Black was OK, but she told me it was important to be proud of every part of my heritage. She advised me that throughout my life I would have to fill out forms like that one and, if ever again I was restricted to one category by which to identify myself, to leave the section blank.

HANDOUT 3.5

THE EXPERIENCES OF MIXED-RACE PEOPLE

by Maria P. P. Root, PhD

Below, I list 50 questions, comments and experiences that evolved from a questionnaire of experiences of multiracial people for a study on biracial siblings I conducted from 1996 to 1997. These questions and comments provide an introduction to the way in which race consciousness is brought up directly, sideways, and from all sides. These comments and questions, though not an exhaustive list, provide a window into how this country internalizes assumptions about race, belonging, and identity. They socialize the mixed-race person to understand as well as question race American style. It is a monoracial system; one race per person. Not everyone experiences these questions or comments similarly. One person might enjoy being asked, "What are you?" whereas their sibling might dread and resent the question. This list provides a launching point for sharing, discussing, laughing, debriefing, and educating.

1. You have been told, "You have to choose; you can't be both."
2. Your ethnicity was mistakenly identified.
3. People assumed your race to be different by phone than in person.
4. You are accused of not acting or wanting to be Latino, Asian, black...
5. You have been told, "Mixed-race people are so beautiful or handsome."
6. Strangers looked between you and your parent(s) to figure out if you were related.
7. You have been told, "You don't look Native, black, Latino..."
8. You have been asked, "What are you?"
9. People say things they might not otherwise say if they knew how you identified racially.
10. You have been asked, "Where are you from?"
11. You have repeatedly been the recipient of stares or longer than passing glances from strangers.
12. You have been told, "You look exotic."
13. Your choice of friends has been interpreted as your "selling out" or not being authentic.
14. You have been accused of "acting or wanting to be white."
15. Judgments of your racial authenticity have been based upon your boyfriend's or girlfriend's (partner's) race.
16. Comments are made about your hair or hairstyle, skin color, eye shape, etc.

HANDOUT 3.5, continued

17. You have been subjected to jokes about mixed-race people.
18. You have been told, "You think you're too good for your own kind."
19. Grandparents or relatives don't accept you because of your parents' interracial relationship.
20. Your parents or relatives compete to "claim" you for their own racial or ethnic group.
21. You have been told, "You have the best of both worlds."
22. You have been asked about your racial or ethnic heritage as an object of curiosity.
23. Upon meeting you, people seem confused by your last name. They do not think it "matches" you.
24. People assume you are confused about your racial identity or have had a hard time figuring it out.
25. People speak to you in foreign languages because of how they interpret your physical appearance.
26. You have been told, "Society doesn't recognize mixed race."
27. You have been told, "You aren't really black, Latino, Asian..."
28. You have been mistaken for another person of mixed heritage who does not resemble you.
29. You have been told you must be full of self-loathing or hatred because of how you racially identify yourself.
30. You have been told, "You are a mistake."
31. Different people perceive your race differently based upon the company you keep.
32. The race people assign you varies in different parts of the United States.
33. You have difficulty filling out forms asking for a single race.
34. You identify your race differently than others identify you.
35. You are told, "You aren't like other Indians, Asians, Latinos..."
36. Your siblings identify their race differently than you do yours.
37. You have been called racial slurs of groups with which you do not share heritage.
38. Friends suggest that you date someone based upon the race or ethnicity with which they think you should identify.
39. Your parents identify your race differently than you identify.
40. You are told, "You aren't black, Latino, Asian...enough"
41. Your mother was assumed to be your nanny or babysitter.
42. A stranger assumes that your father is your "older boyfriend" or your mother is the "older woman."

HANDOUT 3.5, continued

43. You were treated differently than a sibling by relatives or your parents on the basis of racial features.
44. You were well-liked by peers but were not asked for dates.
45. You wish you were darker and try to get as much sun as possible.
46. People assume your father was in the military.
47. You have enrolled in Spanish language classes in order to develop the ability to say "Yes" to the question, "Do you speak the language?" and remove one of the blocks to authenticity.
48. Your otherwise friends become more distant when they think associating with you will make their racial authenticity or popularity questionable.
49. You have been knowingly approached and asked, "Your mother's white (black, Asian), huh?"
50. You have tried to hide one or both parents from view of people who know you but are not your closest friends because you anticipate they will treat you differently.

SUMMARY

Seldom is the racial discrimination that mixed-race children and people experience discussed. Yes, mixed-race people may get more than one experience. However, it is not always the best of both worlds. We are recipients of the old-fashioned type of racism directed towards each of the racial groups. We just get it sometimes for and from more than one group. We are also the recipients of the fear and prejudice that culminates in prejudice against race mixing and its result.

> "I'm mixed, but I'm not mixed up.
>
> I'm not about denying a part of me.
>
> I'm not about trying to pass.
>
> I'm no sell out, no traitor...
>
> If anything, I'm just another hue of you."
>
> Sara B. Busdiecker

Thank goodness children are resilient enough to get through the verbal stone-throwing that thoughtless and fearful comments may represent. Their resiliency at the beginning of this new millenium is buoyed by knowing that there are many other children like them and much more information available for their parents and teachers. However, we must keep in mind that not all children are equally resilient. For the sake of our children and our futures, we must all share in educating ourselves so that our racial consciousness and work on anti-racism are deepened by understanding this aspect of the multiracial experience.

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The Impact of Environmental Factors

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THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON MULTIRACIAL CHILDREN

RATIONALE

Environment consists of many variables: family, community, economic status, access to quality education and societal conditions such as racism and classism. All of these factors have great bearing on the well-being of multiethnic children. Biracial children are vulnerable to the same barriers facing children of color from one race or ethnicity. Child care providers are in a significant position to provide positive environments that enhance the child's sense of self and do not perpetuate the racism and biases that exist in the wider community/society.

TIME

30 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Identify the ways in which social/environmental factors affect the well-being of biracial and bicultural children
- Support the child and family in understanding and coping with the effects of racism and classism
- Identify ways to be proactive in combating prejudice and the effects of racism in the child care setting
- Explore issues of transracial adoption

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. p. 61 Handout 4.1: *The Impact of Environmental Factors on Multiracial Children*
   p. 62 Handout 4.2: *Transracial Adoption of Mixed-Race Youth: A Diary of a Child's Journey*
   p. 65 Handout 4.3: *Black Unlike Me*
   p. 67 Handout 4.4: *Reflecting on Identity and Beliefs*
   p. 68 Handout 4.5: *Four Square Roles Activity*
   p. 69 Handout 4.6: *Identity Circles Activity*
   p. 70 Handout 4.7: *What a Teacher Can Do to Create a Positive Learning Environment for Biracial Children*

continued

2. Flip chart and markers
3. Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*

TEACHING METHODS/SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have participants read Handout 4.1: *The Impact of Environmental Factors on Multiracial Children*, Handout 4.2: *Transracial Adoption of Mixed-Race Youth: A Diary of a Child's Journey* and Handout 4.3: *Black Unlike Me* prior to discussion.
- Ask participants to identify the social and environmental factors that have affected their own growth and development, particularly racism and classism. Identify how these same environmental factors affect the children and families in their programs. Examples: biased assessment practices, and unequal access to education, health care and jobs.
- Use Handout 4.4: *Reflecting on Identity and Beliefs*, Handout 4.5: *Four Square Roles Activity, and* Handout 4.6: *Identity Circles Activity* to facilitate discussion on the personal experiences of the participants in being "different" in some respect and how that affected them. Then discuss the impact of environmental factors on children of color on a daily basis and the long-term effects.
- Develop strategies for helping children and families cope with the effects of racism and other social and environmental factors, and how the child care setting can provide a positive bias-free environment supportive of all children's uniqueness. Record results on the flip chart.
- Refer to the video *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families* and the examples provided by the participants to emphasize how environmental factors affect multiethnic children and families.
- Allow time for questions and answers.
- When using *Handout 4.4: Reflecting on Identity and Beliefs*, keep in mind that the questions can be used individually, as part of staff development, or during a parent meeting. If using this handout with a group, it helps to give people 10-15 minutes to respond to the questions individually in writing or in their heads. Then ask them to share their responses with two or three people. Allot enough time so that everyone gets to share their responses. When everyone is done, talk about the process—what it was like to respond to these questions, what came up for them.
- Review Handout 4.7: *What a Teacher Can Do to Create a Positive Learning Environment for Biracial Children* to highlight how to apply issues discussed in previous activities.

POINT TO REMEMBER

In presenting information on this subject area, stress the importance of not imposing values and opinions on families and children, and to listen rather than judge.

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HANDOUT 4.1

THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON MULTIRACIAL CHILDREN

ARE MULTIRACIAL CHILDREN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST THE SAME WAY CHILDREN OF COLOR ARE?

Dual heritage children are vulnerable to many of the same barriers facing children from one race or ethnicity. A child's ability to cope with these barriers depends on a variety of environmental factors, such as the community in which the child resides, the family's economic status, the child's physical characteristics and the strength of his or her relationship to extended family. A healthy environment is a nurturing and loving one, and it is the single most important factor contributing to any child's development, regardless of race or ethnicity. Love and nurturing can overcome many obstacles; however, significant gaps remain for children of color in the areas of education, health, housing and employment.

HOW CAN I AS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Being aware of racism and its impact on biracial children is an important responsibility for child care providers. An awareness of these factors enables the child care provider to become proactive, sending the message that differences are positive, and that the expression of biases and prejudice is not acceptable. Child care providers, in partnership with parents, can fortify children against the effects of racism and classism by understanding the magnitude of these societal forces. Dr. Marguerite Wright states in her book *I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla*, "Black and biracial children who are emotionally nourished throughout their development preserve the resilience and optimism that most children seem to be born with." The child care provider plays a critical role in emotionally nourishing children. Being aware of the societal forces that place certain children at risk helps child care providers understand the importance of emotional nourishment. This fosters optimism and belief in one's ability to persevere despite obstacles.

> "Biracial children who are emotionally nourished throughout their development preserve the resilience and optimism that most children seem to be born with."
>
> Dr. Marguerite Wright
> I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla

The family is the single most important filter of how children perceive their world. However, for children of color, access to various systems and resources that ensure success can be limited, regardless of the heroic efforts of parents on behalf of their children. Disparities in healthy outcomes for certain racial and ethnic groups remain, and until such a time as these disparities are eradicated, it is important for those working with young children to be aware of the repercussions.

HANDOUT 4.2

TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION OF MIXED-RACE YOUTH: A DIARY OF A CHILD'S JOURNEY

by Gail Steinberg & Beth Hall

Dear Diary,

There I was, all cozy in my bed, the scent of mom's perfume still coming from my blankie after her last nighty-nighty kiss. Suddenly, out of nowhere everything changed. I can't remember what happened but when I woke up I was in another bed with a blanket that had no smell and a different mom and dad I had never seen before talking to me and trying to make me smile. I cried an ocean but a kid has to eat or else she'll die, so when I got hungry I had to let them take care of me. Now I'm used to them and I love them. They adopted me. They're my mom and dad and I'm their kid, but lots of nights before I fall asleep I'm scared something will move me again... it happened once, why couldn't it happen again?

A CHILD'S EXPERIENCE OF ADOPTION

What if you had been forced to leave your family and move in with a new family when you were a kid? From a child's perspective, that is what the experience of being adopted is. Only in rare circumstances is the child given choice or control over a change that will turn her life upside down. It is the child who must do the demanding work of making a transition from an environment that they are used to (and which therefore represents security) to an entirely new world where more things may feel different (and isolating) than the same (and safe). Birth parents and adoptive parents remain in their familiar worlds but the child has to adapt. All adopted children have dual identities, inheriting their temperament and talents from their birth family and learning how to live from their adoptive family. In addition, transracially adopted biracial kids must come to terms with their dual heritages in the context of both adoption and race. The good news is that because human beings have a will to survive and are resilient, most adopted kids adapt well to their new life circumstances and many thrive. Reasonably, however, the process of joining a new family through adoption creates certain emotional sensitivities that become a permanent piece of the adopted person's legacy—a sense that the world is not a "controllable" place or, at a minimum, not a place that the child can control.

WHAT IS TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION?

Transracial adoption means the joining of racially different parents and children together in adoptive families. Most transracial adoptive parents are white. Most transracially adopted kids are of color. Transracial adoption includes children adopted from other countries as well as those born in the United States. This means that kids in transracial families usually must learn to negotiate the racial issues they encounter in our race-conscious society without the benefits of having parents of color who have also had to deal with racial bias and racism. Very often this means that children of color grow up thinking of adoption and race as the same thing. When they are young and concrete thinkers, they notice that people see their adoption by noticing their race. And it continues from there, leading to a sense that sorting out their racial identity is inextricably linked to understanding their adoptive one. Both the experience of being adopted and that of being multiracial are profound and important to the understanding of self. Together they are more and not less than the journey or either alone.

HANDOUT 4.2, continued

Dear Diary,

Here's the deal. In order to feel real, I have to figure out where I exactly belong. Mom and Dad are white and I know I belong with them. Even though they don't say so I'm afraid that if I don't act white like them, they won't want me with them any more. After losing my birth family, I can't take that risk. Even among other biracial people with whom I have "so much in common," I feel separate. They talk about the cultural wars between parents: Mom wanted to fix won tons, but Dad insisted on corn beef. I am different once again even when I almost can fit in exactly... I realize that once again I am on the periphery. Everyone seems to come from a family with two identifiable mirrors. They get to see the source of their mixture, their differences split by their blended roots. It's as if my mirror is covered up."[1]

Transracial adoption adds an additional level of complexity to a biracial or multiracial child's life. Many white adoptive parents have been told by adoption "experts" that it is more acceptable for them to adopt a child who is "part white" because the child will be half like them, making them feel there is a legitimacy to their becoming the child's parents. But basing the success of adoption on matching doesn't work. Even when the children match their parents racially they don't match genetically, and if they try to "replicate" the traditional family where children are born to their parents, they can never measure up. If children are taught to believe that they belong with their family because of the white part of their heritage, they risk seeing their identity as people of color as somehow working against family unity. The child in this context must put priority on developing the characteristics (being or trying to be white) that help him or her belong in the family. Reality and self-image have to split. The child must hide half of herself behind a white mask in order to feel part of her family. Can anyone wear a mask all of the time and maintain his or her pride?

Dear Diary,

Now I'm black! Mom and Dad want me to be black and proud. Every night at dinner they teach me black history. Well, I guess I can do it; I have pretty good experience at finding ways to "fit."

Over or under emphasizing or simplifying racial issues doesn't serve transracially-adopted children. Sometimes adoptive parents push African, Asian, Native or Latino identity for their biracial child, and feel guilty or ashamed if the child does not rigidly identify that way. These parents are concerned that if their kids deny being of color when everyone else who looks like them is considered of color, the child will be subjected to all the liabilities of being of color, but lose out on the positive benefits. They agree with Lise Funderberg that biracial kids "should be taught to claim their black side first because that's

[1]Susan Ito, Hambun-Hambun, Pact Press, 1997

HANDOUT 4.2, continued

the side that needs sticking up for." The down side to this approach is that pressure is put on the biracial or multiracial child to deny a portion of her heritage and once again choices are removed from the child and being "decided" by others. She is given the message that she must identify according to the way others identify her or expect her to identify. Again, she is being asked to adopt a false self, to abandon a part of her racial inheritance, leave it behind as if it was of no value.

Dear Diary,

I finally figured it out. It's OK that I'm different. I get along best with other people who feel different. When I'm with my friends of color I feel like I belong, I know how to talk the talk and walk the walk; the only thing is, I know a lot more about white folks than most of them do and that's OK, sometimes even good. The same thing happens when I hang out with white kids. I know a lot more about racism and what it feels like to be of color than they do, but I can walk their walk and talk their talk. Just call me chameleon...it's not a bad deal.

Feelings of belonging do not come in halves; one either feels part of or separate from. If a strong goal of any child who has been disconnected from birth family is to feel the reassurance of fully belonging to their adoptive family, their peer group, their community, their culture, their ancestry, their country, their universe, then they have the right to skills to help them meet those goals. What is required is a racial identification that can remain fluid and contextual ...an ability to locate self between identities and make a seamless transformation at will, somehow continuing to be oneself in various identities. This comes from being able to understand the cues and being able to identify with ALL that one is. This means that parents have to give their children the opportunity to experience both (or all) of their birth heritages so the child can learn the cues and become equipped to negotiate their own identification in the context of both groups. It also means parents will need to give their child explicit and implicit permission to identify as they feel comfortable, so the child does not feel they risk losing membership in their family by trying on any of the different identities that are their birth right. This is easier said than done for adoptive families who, unlike their interracially married counterparts in birth families of multiracial children, have not necessarily had the first-hand experience of dealing with issues of racial difference before becoming a parent. These parents need opportunities to normalize their own experiences through interactions not only with other transracial adoptive families but also with other families of color who have experienced racial bias and have cultural strengths to pass along to their children in ways that whites in America generally do not.

Denying difference is not an option. Celebrating and acknowledging our differences can ultimately lead our children to strength in understanding all that they are. It takes work, but the richness and fullness of the journey are well worth the struggle.

Beth and Gail are the co-founding directors of Pact, An Adoption Alliance, as well as adoptive parents to children of different races and ethnicities. They are also the authors of *Inside Transracial Adoption*, a must-read book that pulls no punches. Along with their work as co-directors, Beth and Gail have conducted numerous trainings for local and national parent and professional groups on issues related to race and adoption, client assessment, services for adoptive families after placement and recruitment of families of color to adopt, among other topics.

HANDOUT 4.3

BLACK UNLIKE ME

"I hate collars," shouts my 7-year-old son into his mattress, where he has thrown himself, 20 minutes before we need to leave for school. I just woke him and we're in the middle of a fight I can't remember starting. It's no surprise that a second-grade boy would prefer to wear an oversized sleeveless jersey—Chicago Bulls red, No. 23—rather than a button-down shirt with a collar. But this is a school day, I explain to Ari, and you go to school not to play but to learn.

I didn't like the mini-sermon I felt coming on, but I couldn't stop myself. I chose that moment to make the connection between collared shirts and racism to my black son. I said that it was really important for him to look his best and do his best because there were idiots in the world who actually thought that people with dark skin were not as clean, or as smart, or as good as others. My son could prove them wrong on all counts.

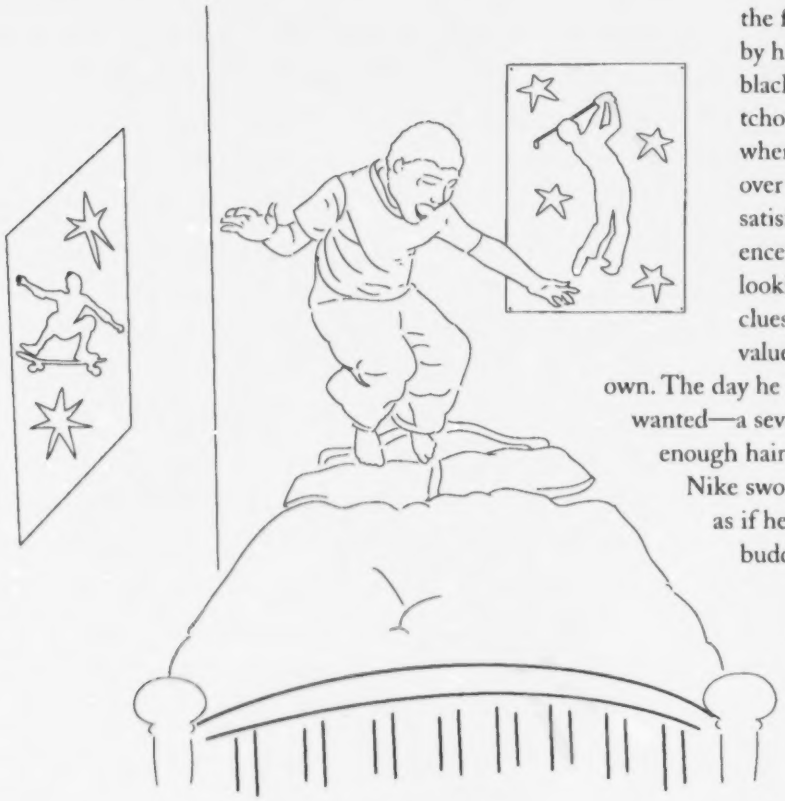
Even before I finished, Ari crumbled before my eyes. From face down on his mattress, where he was trying to dig a cave under his blanket, came his muffled voice: "I hate this." And I knew just what he meant. He has heard me talk about prejudice since he learned his colors at 2-1/2: "People with pink skin aren't always nice to people with brown skin." Truth is, the beginnings of this dawn-hour diatribe started many years ago, when my husband and I adopted our infant son. That's when I woke up from a deep, white sleep. Suddenly racism, which had always existed outside my focus, became my focus. When children of color become your children, anonymous struggles become personal ones with names and faces that you know.

> "I want Ari to internalize truths that aren't yet true: that to get straight A's is a black thing; that to set a positive example is a black thing; that to be a success in any arena is a black thing."

I wanted to walk out of Ari's bedroom and go back in as if none of this had happened. But it was too late. I had already done that thing again. That thing that white parents who have black children do: we move from racially clueless to racially conscious in the most clumsy of ways, never turning off our radar or putting down our dukes. Then we pass along our loaded agendas to our children and scare them with an edginess that is characteristic of late learners. I jumped in to fight the battle against racism with an indignation that was earnest but not earned.

It must be very hard for a child to have, as tour guides, parents who are tourists themselves. The risk is that the culture being visited will be reduced to its souvenirs. All I have to do is look around Ari's room—past the clutter of Lego pieces, open books and plastic swords—to see my son's life as a pathetic collection of props: the Michael Jordan poster on the wall; the knitted Senegalese cap hanging from the doorknob;

HANDOUT 4.3, continued



the framed autograph of Tiger Woods by his bed. The process of becoming black must lie somewhere beyond ethnic tchotchkes like these. I'm just not sure where. Ari's preference for peers over parents at this age gives me more satisfaction than most mothers experience as their young children mature. In looking toward his black friends for clues, he lands on the symbols that they value most, and he makes them his own. The day he got his hair cut exactly the way he wanted—a severe buzz on the sides with just enough hair left on top for the barber to carve a Nike swoosh—Ari walked out of that shop as if he had grown a foot taller. I had his buddies to thank for that boost.

I want to expand the ways for my son to be black, beyond cool haircuts and athletic heroes. The images of success in Ari's bedroom invite him to aspire to narrowly defined black standards; I'd rather my son experience the white privilege of believing that there are no limitations on who he can be and what he can do. I want Ari to internalize truths that aren't yet true: that to get straight A's is a black thing; that to set a positive example is a black thing; that to be a success in any arena is a black thing. But you can't decorate your room with these constructs. It dawned on me that morning that you can't rely on collared shirts to ward off bigotry or enhance self-esteem. "It's OK with me, Babe, if you wear a different shirt." Ari started heading for the dresser, when I added that it couldn't be sleeveless and it had to be clean. From the top drawer he pulled out an oversized black T-shirt with Grant Hill's picture on it. Then he sped downstairs for breakfast before I could change my mind or bring up the subject of racial pride again.

It is with a mixture of sadness and relief that I've begun to understand this much: becoming black is an inside job—my son's job. I can help by bringing black friends and customs and even props into our lives, but Ari's evolution into a proud black man will occur largely outside the walls of our home. And most of his growing, I'm convinced, will happen well beyond the reach of my loving white arms.

By Jana Wolff, *New York Times Magazine*. Reprinted with permission from the author.

HANDOUT 4.4

REFLECTING ON IDENTITY AND BELIEFS

1. How do you describe your own identity? What about your "racial identity?" Your languages? Your nationality? Your ethnic background? What other important group identifications seem central to who you are? What feelings do you have about your identity? Is it important to you? Why or why not?

2. How did you learn about being part of a group identity? What are your earliest memories of learning and constructing these identities? Was there any satisfaction or pain as you learned about who you are?

3. As a child, when did you meet people who were of a different racial, cultural or religious background? Were those experiences positive or negative? What did you learn from those experiences? How might those experiences influence what you do when you come across someone from the same cultural or racial group today?

4. How would you describe your family's race and culture? What traditions did your family keep? Were they related to race, culture, ethnicity or religion? What would you want to pass on to your children?

5. What languages were spoken around you while you were growing up? By whom—your parents, friends, grandparents, neighbors? If you heard more than one language, did you learn any of the others? Why or why not? If you only heard a single language spoken, how does that make you feel when you come into contact with people who can't speak to you in your home language? How does your experience with language influence your views about bilingualism?

Source: *A Place to Begin.* California Tomorrow, Oakland, CA

HANDOUT 4.5

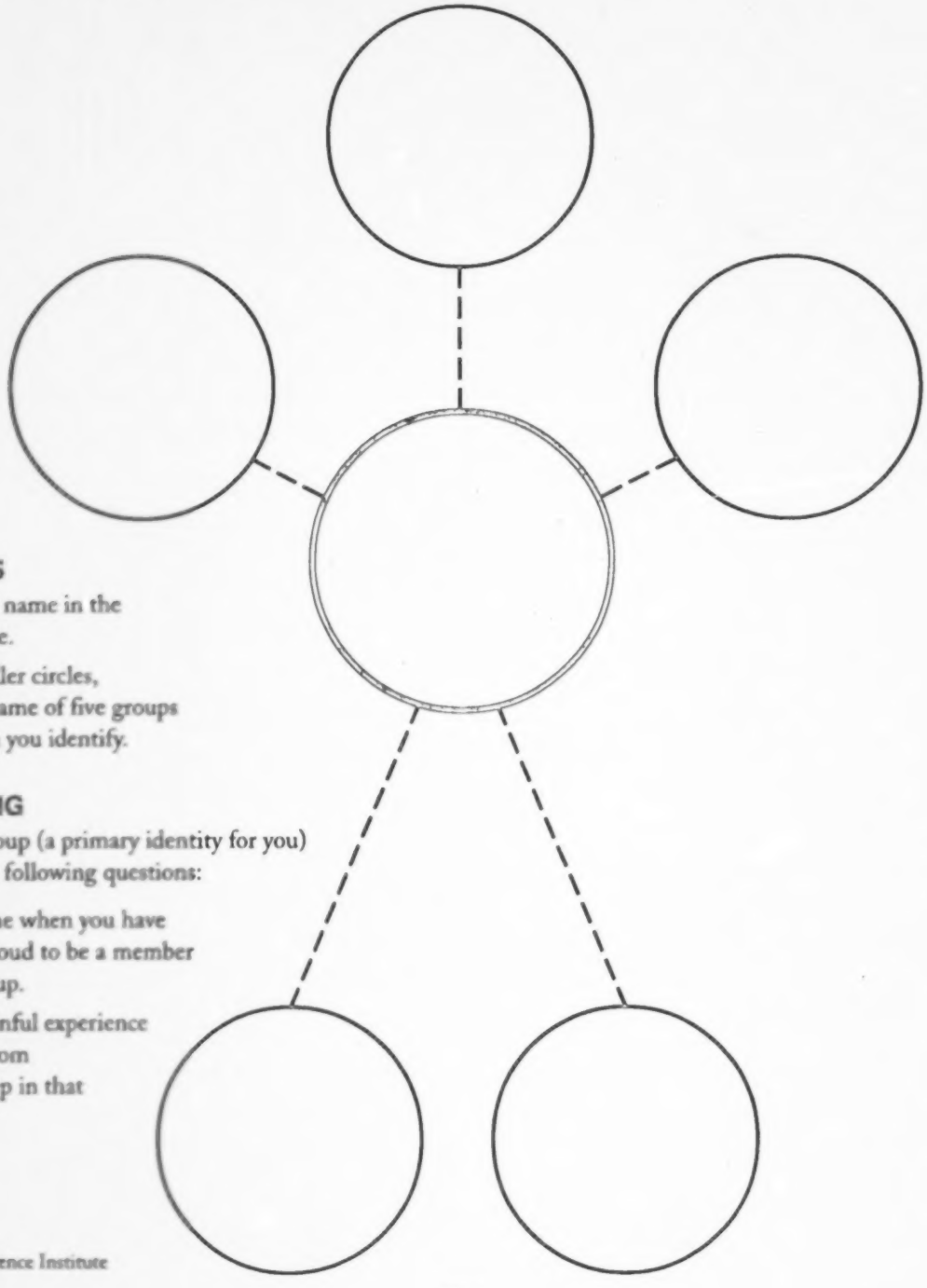
FOUR SQUARE ROLES ACTIVITY

Fill in each square. In a group discussion, share your experiences in all four roles and how they have affected your development as well as how you work with families and children.

VICTIM A time when someone's words or actions hurt you.	**PERPETRATOR** A time when you said or did something you wished you could take back.
BYSTANDER A time when you did not interrupt prejudice.	**CONFRONTER** A time when you interrupted prejudice.

HANDOUT 4.6

IDENTITY CIRCLES ACTIVITY



DIRECTIONS

1. Write your name in the center circle.
2. In the smaller circles, write the name of five groups with which you identify.

FOR SHARING

Choose one group (a primary identity for you) and answer the following questions:

1. Share a time when you have felt very proud to be a member of that group.
2. Share a painful experience resulting from membership in that group.

Source:
A World of Difference Institute

HANDOUT 4.7

WHAT A TEACHER CAN DO TO CREATE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR BIRACIAL CHILDREN

There are a number of things that an effective program should provide specifically for children of dual heritage which promote identity development. We have developed the following suggestions, drawing from three sources (Neugebauer 1987; Wardle 1987; and Derman-Sparks & the A.B.C. Task Force 1989). The environment should be set up to provide:

- A variety of age-appropriate books about biracial children and/or interracial marriage
- A variety of age-appropriate books about the heritages of the mother and father of the biracial child
- Historical information about the child's ethnic and cultural roots
- Created stories that closely resemble the children in the group
- A variety of music that reflects the cultural backgrounds of all the children in the class
- Dolls of various racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Art materials that include all colors and various hues that can represent skin tones
- Pictures of the children and their families in the class
- Posters that reflect the variety of people and families found in the world
- Manipulative and toy materials that reflect the variety of people and families found in the world
- Puzzles, miniature people, props in dramatic play, games, superhero and fantasy objects that represent children's cultural backgrounds
- Parental participation in all parts of the program
- Resource persons who reflect the child's heritage
- Planned field trips that promote any part of the child's heritage
- Prompt responses to differences that children notice, simple but accurate answers, clarification of any misconceptions
- Planned activities that provide the children with accurate information about the various differences and cultures of the children within the group

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Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care

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ENSURING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY IN CHILD CARE PROGRAMS FOR BIRACIAL CHILDREN

RATIONALE

Sensitivity to the beliefs and practices of all racial/ethnic groups is a key ingredient for quality child care, and cultural sensitivity always begins with clarifying your own values and beliefs. Understanding and recognizing the biases you grew up with is a first step towards growth and being better able to project a positive message to children, one that is authentic and sincere. All staff must commit to this process.

TIME

30 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Recognize the biases and assumptions we have now and those we grew up with regarding the cultural beliefs and practices of multiracial families
- Have awareness as to why biracial and bicultural children may choose more than one identity and change identities
- Support the choices of the family with understanding and without imposing their own beliefs and values
- Help children and their families feel comfortable with differences

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. p. 75 Handout 5.1: *Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care Programs for Bicultural Children*

   p. 77 Handout 5.2: *It's Not Always Black and White*

   p. 80 Handout 5.3: *Coping with Cultural Conflicts Between Parents*

   p. 81 Handout 5.4: *Ways and Means: Associating Culture with Child-Rearing Patterns*

   p. 83 Handout 5.5: *Questions to Ask Yourself About Diversity in Your Classroom*

   p. 84 Overhead 5.1: *Ten Questions to Ask When You Disagree with a Family's Practice*

continued

2. Flip chart and markers
3. Overhead projector
4. Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*

TEACHING METHODS/SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have participants read Handout 5.1: *Ensuring Cultural Sensitivity in Child Care Programs for Bicultural Children*, Handout 5.2: *It's Not Always Black and White* and Handout 5.3: *Coping with Cultural Conflicts Between Parents* prior to discussion.
- Using Overhead 5.1: *Ten Questions to Ask When You Disagree with a Family's Practice*, discuss topic in small groups.
- Have participants complete Handout 5.4: *Ways and Means: Associating Culture with Child-Rearing Patterns* and continue discussion in small groups.
- Have participants silently answer the questions in Handout 5.5: *Questions to Ask Yourself About Diversity in Your Classroom*, then break into small groups and have participants discuss their answers.
- Allow time for questions and answers.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

a. Be mindful of the sensitive nature of these subject areas when facilitating discussion.

b. In some states such as California and many urban areas nationally, there is no racial/ethnic majority within the younger populations. These shifting racial/ethnic demographics will have a dramatic effect on child care populations, requiring child care providers to increase cultural sensitivity and competency in child care programs.

HANDOUT 5.1

ENSURING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY IN CHILD CARE PROGRAMS FOR BICULTURAL CHILDREN

Ensuring cultural sensitivity for bicultural children in child care programs requires that child care providers integrate multicultural education into all aspects of the child's learning experience. This avoids the traps set by using a "tourist" approach of holidays. Understanding the issues that bicultural families face requires a commitment to embrace diversity and stay attuned to the effects of biases and racism that remain a contending force in our society. Promoting diversity as a positive attribute, respecting the individual beliefs and practices of each family, and remaining open to new approaches ensures cultural sensitivity in the child care setting.

As a child care provider, you are a significant adult in the life of children on a day-to-day basis, intimately involved with the well-being of each child placed in your care. A situation may arise when you conflict with parents over methods for dealing with issues such as discipline, health remedies, sleeping arrangements, nutrition, and skin or hair care. Some practices are based on strong cultural traditions, and some on unique family dynamics and practices unrelated to culture. It is important to distinguish between the two.

Culture is passed through the family. Influences of culture on child-rearing include:

- Age-related expectations
- Sleep patterns
- Children's roles and responsibilities in the family
- Diet and mealtime behavior
- Discipline
- How parents talk to children
- How parents show affection
- Traditional sex roles and gender identity
- Dress and hair care
- Health practices and beliefs
- Child's attachment to and separation from adults

HANDOUT 5.1, continued

Considering and including new and differing points of view can be challenging, particularly if you feel you have experienced success over the years with current practices. Multiethnic families are a blending of cultural practices. Sensitivity to the needs of families with more than one culture is an added dimension to offering a child care setting that embraces multicultural education.

Biracial children are redefining what is "multicultural" and challenging previously held notions of race and ethnicity. Multiethnic families themselves are working through the issues of raising children with dual identities. Practicing flexibility and inclusion for the individual needs presented by each family is an important skill. This is not meant to suggest that child care providers should withhold the benefits of their experience and training. On the contrary, child care providers can serve as a sounding board for the family's concerns, assist with practical matters when they may have more experience, and share their knowledge in a supportive, non-threatening manner.

Regularly attending workshops, classes and seminars on diversity and multicultural education expands your knowledge and comfort level in addressing these issues. Additional training assists you in integrating newly acquired information into your program and promoting the positive aspects of multicultural education to parents and other child care professionals. These are just a few examples of how child care providers can ensure cultural sensitivity in their programs for biracial and bicultural families.

"Regularly attending workshops, classes and seminars on diversity and multicultural education expands your knowledge and comfort level in addressing these issues."

Evaluate all aspects of your program, including the questions used when interviewing parents. Ask parents for feedback. Observe families and how they interact with each other. In order to respond to the family's individual needs, it is important to have information on how the children view their racial identity, and how the family blends cultural practices and possible conflicts and concerns regarding those practices.

Validate the experiences of all children by speaking openly and positively, and encouraging children and parents to do the same. A combination of all these efforts, along with a heartfelt commitment to multicultural education, is the key to ensuring cultural sensitivity in child care programs.

HANDOUT 5.2

IT'S NOT ALWAYS BLACK AND WHITE

Claire Bainers, MA

As adults in a race-conscious world, we define ourselves and others in terms of appearance and racial identification. Working with preschool children, it is important to set aside this preoccupation with the single characteristic of race and allow the children to perceive themselves in their own wholeness.

Preschool children are egocentric, but they are not particularly interested in their looks. It is the *adults* who are looking at them saying how cute and big and handsome they are—most kids could care less. It is also the adult who will stop a parent and, looking at a child of mixed race, ask insensitive questions like "What is he?" While they are probably just wondering aloud what racial combination could make such a beautiful child, such odd questions can nevertheless be quite upsetting to parents. As they scramble to come up with an appropriate response the child is listening, watching, and feeling the parent's discomfort and worry. So it is important to remember that one of the strongest forms of communication for children under five is nonverbal and intuitive. Young children are so good at this that they know a parent is going out and leaving them with a babysitter even if not a word is said about it. They worry when parents are worried and they are upset and won't go to sleep if parents are mad and upset. It is this tuned-in, sensitive, intuitive perception that puts the meaning behind the words in language acquisition; it is that invisible something that puts the meaning in slang words; and it is the thing that makes young children amazing and full of surprises and sometimes difficult. Knowing this, adults can see how important it is for them to be very careful about the nonverbal messages that they give out.

> "Preschool children are egocentric, but they are not particularly interested in their looks. It is the adults who are looking at them saying how cute and big and handsome they are—most kids could care less."
>
> Claire Bainers, MA

Thus the first part of thinking about how to respond to insensitive or thoughtless or surprising questions is to find out what people are really thinking about. One way to do this is to respond with a question such as "I don't understand what you are asking me—I wonder what you are thinking when you say that?" While it is not snappy or clever, a question like this helps people clarify and reframe what they said... and it gives you time and information so you can respond wisely. It works well for both children and adults. Here is a story about just such an event:

A mom recounted this odd conversation she had one day while driving a 3-year-old to day care:

> From the back seat the child said "Mom, I see a bad guy! He's hiding in the bushes and peeking in the windows! He's over there by that house; he's hiding down low in the

HANDOUT 5.2, continued

> bushes! He's black and he's peeking in the house." The mom says how concerned and upset she felt driving down the urban street; she saw nothing in the bushes and she couldn't understand how her child could think that a black guy in the bushes was a "bad guy;" did he see someone gardening? The mom said that as she was carefully formulating her response, the child added "and he has a waggy tail and says woof!"

Imagine what the mother could have taught her child about racism if she had told him all about how wrong he was to assume that a black person was a bad guy! *Her* assumption would have set in her child's mind the very stereotype that she was eager to dispel! So we adults working with children, teaching children, and influencing how their thinking will evolve wisely feel our way carefully toward the truth in each situation without jumping to conclusions.

We must be very aware, careful, and thoughtful about how we respond. Every time, every word we say counts. So we pay attention to how we feel inside when these unpleasant or surprising events occur. The first thing to do is to identify our own gut reactions, and the next is to decide what to do about it. Make time by asking a question if needed ("I wonder what you are thinking"), make a plan and manage your reaction. Practice and correct yourself; if you realize later you may have over-interpreted, you can say "I was thinking about what happened and I began to wonder if you were really thinking about …." Here is a second wonderful story demonstrating this.

> One day Latasha's grandmother, who worked in the South in the early sixties on civil rights issues, came to pick up Latasha. Latasha was playing with her best friends, Nikko and Teresa, who, like Latasha, are 4 years old and of mixed race. Latasha told her grandmother, "We're playing we're all white girls!" Grandma looked shocked, stepped closer to her granddaughter, stroked her face and said "oh Tasha" with a voice full of compassion and sadness.
>
> A teacher who had been watching the play came over and said to Teresa, "I saw you girls were playing up high on the climber." Teresa responded "We can see over the fence, we saw a squirrel, and we played that we were all white girls." Then Nikko said "And then we played we were all brown girls, then yellow girls!" The teacher later explained to the grandmother that, like a little boy who learns about who he is by dressing up as the mom in the doll house, so were the girls learning about being themselves by talking about and playing to be a different color.

When they reach elementary school, children's learning will focus on the academic training of the mind and study the pieces and reasons and details and other people's thoughts. Preschool children, however, ride on the waves of intuition; by pretending and playing they work through the confusing adult world which they will engage. Adult responses teach the child the adult's experiences in the world. (Preschool children categorize objects by size or color; this process gives us insight into how the growing brain is beginning to order itself but is not so much about concepts like race). Tasha's grandmother, having experienced segregation, found her thoughts going right away to racism and the duality of "less than and better than" that she

HANDOUT 5.2, continued

experienced in her life. The teacher, living and thinking in the world of the child as well as the world of the adult, waited to see where the children were going with their thoughts. If the grandma had immediately responded to the first statement with "But you're a beautiful African-American girl!" or made the children feel they had done something wrong, the children's opportunity to explore their world would have been overshadowed with the grandmother's 40-year-old experience which was not relevant to the girls' play. In that case the teacher might intercept with a statement like "I wonder what these girls are thinking? Let's ask them to tell us more about their game."

The teacher's role is to help children sort out their feelings and connect language with their developmental understanding of the world. To help the children, the teacher keeps her own emotions neutral so her feelings don't interfere with the children's perceptions of the world. To attempt to break down children's holistic thinking by separating people into categories like race, color, family configuration or behavior becomes a disservice to the preschool-aged child whose immature mind is not yet processing abstract concepts well, easily leading to misunderstandings that distract the child from finding the truth—a truth we adults already know. We know that people like people for who they truly are. We like people for their kindness and for their good ideas, or their ability to share their happiness, or the way they make us feel, or how they love us and respect us. Qualities that, in fact, have nothing to do with external appearances.

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Most parents simply can't bear the thought of their child being hurt; we would do just about anything to protect them, but sometimes the protecting actually can backfire. People who have real and hurtful experience of racism want to be sure their children take pride in themselves and recognize their rights to respect and equal treatment. As this video and educator's guide are intended for use by early care educators, however, this article presents techniques for those working with young children to be able to set aside their pre-conceptions and personal experience so that they can effectively explain the world as the children understand it, so the children will feel affirmed and understood—key qualities for receptive learning in the preschool child. Preschool teachers working to help children through all these "color" and "identity" issues must put aside their experiences to help the child develop their own. In the elementary years, as children's capacity for abstraction increases, the issues of race and color can be discussed at another level.

HANDOUT 5.3

COPING WITH CULTURAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN PARENTS

Coping with conflicts between parents from the same racial/ethnic groups can be a difficult dilemma for a child care provider. However, when the conflict pertains to cultural differences, it can be particularly uncomfortable. Parents may express conflicting messages to the child care provider in regard to feeding practices, hygiene, discipline, dress, toilet habits, language to be spoken, and just about every aspect of the child's care. These are very sensitive issues which can create a double bind, placing the provider in the middle.

As the child care provider, your first step is to clarify your values and determine if they favor one parent's cultural beliefs and practices over the other. An honest self-appraisal will avoid furthering the conflict and support the best interests of the child. Ask yourself questions about which belief or practice most closely resembles your own, and how you might favor one parent's beliefs and practices, either consciously or unconsciously. Because the child care provider is a significant person in the child's life, parents may try to enlist the child care provider as their ally. Resist the invitation to align yourself with one parent, as it can drive the wedge between the parents—and the parents and child—even deeper.

When cultural conflicts surface between parents, the provider is not the only one drawn into the crossfire. The child is very much affected by conflicts that arise between parents or among their extended family, and may often find themselves torn and upset by the tension brewing, even if they do not understand the conflict. Cultural conflicts are sometimes a result of family dynamics that may or may not confine themselves to cultural issues alone. If one parent asks you to do something that contradicts the other parent's previous instructions, it might be a good idea to suggest a meeting with both parents to discuss the situation. As the child care provider, it is not your role to solve the problem. However, you are in a unique position to make parents aware of the conflict and the possible effects on the child. Explain that you are not able to choose sides, nor are you able to satisfy both parents when the wishes are contradictory. The conflict may be resolved by meeting with the parents; however, if the differences are of a more serious nature, counseling or some form of mediation with a professional or mutually respected third party should be recommended.

Engaging in a non-accusatory discussion with the parents will enable them to see that as a child care provider you cannot follow conflicting cultural practices. Try to honor all aspects of the child's cultural and ethnic background. Develop a strategy as a team to help diffuse any conflicts and pave the way for greater understanding and respect of the cultural beliefs and practices of both parents, thus supporting the child's positive cultural/racial/ethnic identity development.

HANDOUT 5.4

WAYS AND MEANS: ASSOCIATING CULTURE WITH CHILD-REARING PATTERNS

DIRECTIONS

Use this handout to help you identify your cultural thinking regarding child rearing. Consider three sources when answering the questions:

1) Developmentally appropriate practice
2) Early childhood course work and information you have received in workshops
3) Your program's policies and procedures

Give an example for each age group of an age-related expectation. Then in small groups, discuss questions below in relationship to your expectations.

INFANTS

Age

Expectation

TODDLERS

Age

Expectation

PRESCHOOLERS

Age

Expectation

SCHOOL-AGERS

Age

Expectation

HANDOUT 5.4, continued

How important is it that children acquire these age-related skills?

What is the sleep pattern of young children in your program?

How do you put children down for a nap?

What type of foods do you serve at meals?

How do you organize and serve meals?

What are children's responsibilities in the classroom?

How do you toilet train children?

How do you discipline children?

What values do you try to instill in children?

Adapted from *Developing Roots & Wings.*

HANDOUT 5.5

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF ABOUT DIVERSITY IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Think about your classroom or family child care program and consider the following questions:

1. Am I aware of all the races and ethnicities represented in my classroom?

2. Do I know the ethnic backgrounds and practices of parents and family members of each of my children?

3. Do the materials in my room reflect the community, the racial and ethnic background, cultures and interests of my children and families?

4. In what ways do I think the children in my class might benefit from a more open-minded attitude?

5. Do I know my own biases? Have I made efforts to understand them and assure they do not negatively affect the children I care for?

6. What groups of people and ways of life are missing from my room?

7. What changes can I make in my program to provide a learning experience that is responsive to all the children I teach?

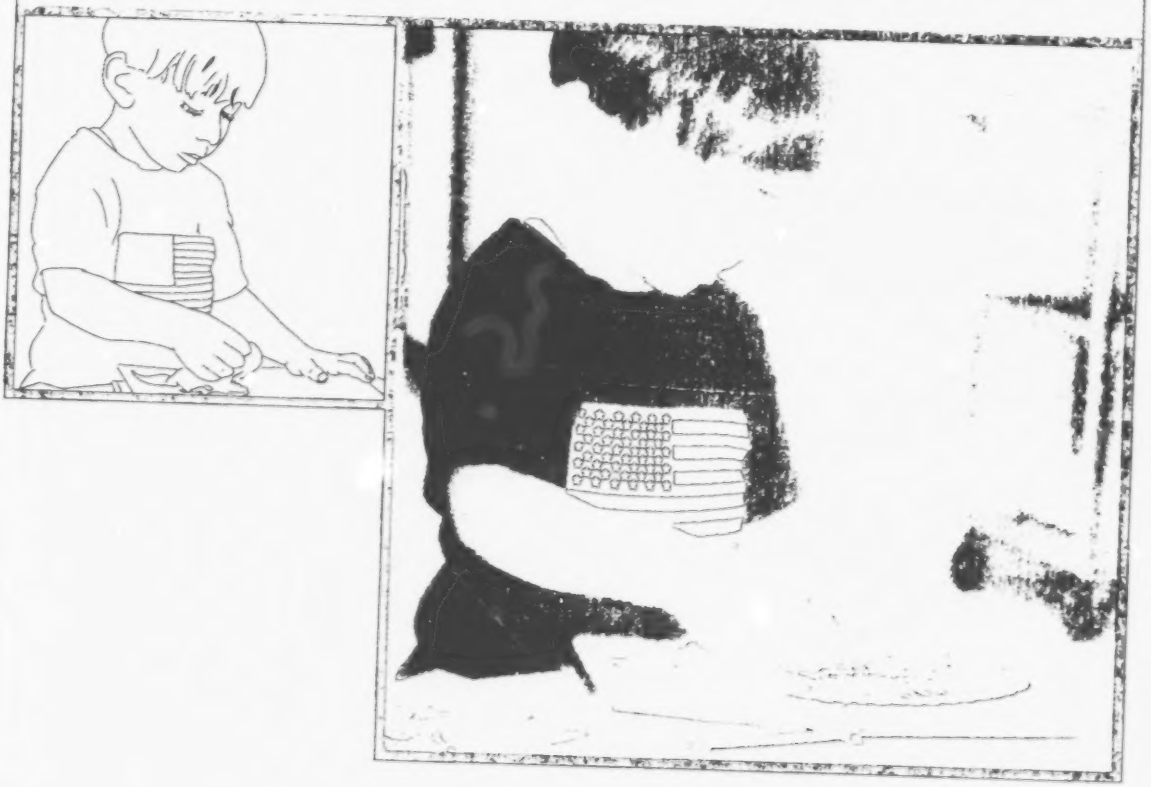
OVERHEAD 5.1

TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN YOU DISAGREE WITH A FAMILY'S PRACTICE

1. What is the family's cultural perspective on this issue?
2. How do the family's child care practices relate to their cultural perspective?
3. What are the family's goals for the child? How has the family's culture influenced these goals?
4. In view of these goals, is the family's practice in the child's best interests?
5. Is there any sound research which shows that the family's practice is doing actual harm?
6. Is the program's practice or policy universally applicable or is it better suited to a particular culture?
7. Did the family choose the program because of its particular philosophy, even if it is based on a different culture from their own?
8. Have program staff members attempted to fully understand the family's rationale for its practices, the complexity of the issues, and other contributing factors?
9. Have staff members attempted to fully explain the rationale for program practices? Have they looked at how their own culture influences their perspective?
10. What are some creative resolutions that address the concerns of both parents and the program?

6

Integrating Materials and Activities



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INTEGRATING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES ON BIRACIAL CHILDREN INTO EXISTING MULTICULTURAL CURRICULA

RATIONALE

The use of this curriculum guide is based on the assumption that a multicultural approach is already in place. If not, review available curricula and choose a program that works best for you. Multicultural curricula are intended to be integrated into the daily schedule of activities and into all aspects of learning. Many of the activities found in multicultural curricula can be adapted to address the needs of biracial children by including the concept of dual identities and gearing activities to be inclusive of biracial children and their families.

One exposure is not enough—repetition is a key factor in learning. Activities should be integrated into the daily program using multicultural materials and activities that are inclusive of biracial children.

TIME

30 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Understand the value of using a multicultural approach that includes the unique needs of biracial and bicultural children
- Adapt activities and materials to include multiracial children
- Assist parents by modeling activities and offering materials and resources
- Ask parents to assist staff in offering materials and resources
- Access and use current and accurate information on biracial and multiethnic children and families

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. Selected books from the bibliography
2. p. 89 Handout 6.1: *Integrating Materials and Activities on Biracial and Bicultural Children into Existing Multicultural Curricula*
   p. 91 Handout 6.2: *Multiracial and Multicultural Materials*
   p. 93 Handout 6.3: *What Crayon Am I?*
   p. 94 Handout 6.4: *One Big Family*

continued

p. 95 Handout 6.5: *Activities for Learning About Racial Physical Differences*

p. 98 Overhead 6.1: *Integrating Materials and Activities for Biracial Children*

3. Flip chart and markers
4. Video: *Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families*
5. Overhead Projector

TEACHING METHODS/SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Ask participants to:

- Have participants read Handout 6.1: *Integrating Materials and Activities on Biracial and Bicultural Children into Existing Multicultural Curricula* and Handout 6.2: *Multiracial and Multicultural Materials* prior to discussion.
- Identify and discuss what works most successfully when using multicultural curricula.
- Identify what areas are most in need of improvement and why you feel they are not working.
- List resources and materials currently used in working with issues of race and ethnicity.
- Using Handout 6.3: *What Crayon Am I?*, Handout 6.4: *One Big Family* and Handout 6.5: *Activities for Learning About Racial Physical Differences*, discuss how these activities can be adapted to include biracial children. Allow for group contributions and suggestions. Working in small groups, have participants adapt and create other activities that are inclusive and sensitive to the needs of biracial children. Encourage creativity and teamwork.
- Ask what criteria are used in evaluating the appropriateness and accuracy of the information and resources you use in reference to issues of race and ethnicity? Is there access to adequate and accurate information? How does having accurate information prevent stereotyping, assumptions and bias?
- Review available resources such as bibliographies, online resources, videos and current articles. Use samples of the bibliography and online resource handouts to illustrate the variety of information available, and how having access to accurate information contributes to quality child care environments that support the unique needs of biracial children.
- In small groups, use Overhead 6.1: *Integrating Materials and Activities for Biracial Children* as a checklist to evaluate current materials.
- Allow time for questions and answers.

POINT TO REMEMBER

Always keep in mind the sensitive nature of the subject matter.

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HANDOUT 6.1

INTEGRATING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES ON BIRACIAL AND BICULTURAL CHILDREN INTO EXISTING MULTICULTURAL CURRICULA

WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO DIFFERENTLY FOR BIRACIAL/BICULTURAL CHILDREN?

The first step is to clarify your own values and assumptions about working with biracial/bicultural children and their families. Familiarize yourself with the unique issues facing biracial/bicultural children and validate each child's experience. If the activity relates to family, be sure to mention different kinds of families, including biracial/bicultural children who are adopted. Activities such as photo collages, family trees and family portraits are natural ways for children to proudly illustrate their families. The projects are a natural springboard for discussion. Different textures of hair, varying hues of skin color and languages other than English that are spoken in the home are some of the things which make us different. Mentioning the diversity in each family and how beautiful it is validates each child's experience. This leads to respect and acceptance of differences.

> "Making mention of the diversity in each family and how beautiful it is validates each child's experience."

When celebrating cultural practices and holidays, mention that some children participate in more than one celebration or practice, and that it is not unusual to do so. This validation avoids pressure the child may feel to choose one of their racial/ethnic identities over the other. Having a selection of books, posters, hues of crayons and paint allows for children to accurately identify themselves and their family. Ask children to describe the different kinds of families they see and are part of as a follow-up to any related activity. Maintain a positive tone during discussions, emphasizing commonalties as well as differences. As human beings, we are part of families, share interests, live in communities, go to sleep when we are tired and eat when we are hungry. We are different and alike, all at the same time!

SHOULD I ASK THE FAMILY FOR SUGGESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO ADAPT ACTIVITIES FOR THEIR CHILD?

It is always a good idea to involve the family by asking for suggestions and feedback. They may be aware of materials and resources that would be useful in the child care setting. For some biracial/bicultural families, there are sensitive issues connected to race and ethnicity, and these issues may surface during a discussion or parent-teacher conference.

It is important to understand how the family is affected, and how this may affect the child in her interactions with peers. During discussions or activities about family, race and ethnicity in the classroom, feelings about being different may cause a conflict or hurt feelings. This presents an opportunity to combat racism and promote a positive message about diversity.

HANDOUT 6.1, continued

- It is important not to ignore comments about race or ethnicity, or leave questions unanswered. Your response to such questions and comments is important; respond honestly and in a manner that is developmentally appropriate.
- Acquaint yourself with the ages and stages of racial/ethnic identity development.
- Involve parents: they are the best source of information on their children. Inform them of issues which arise regarding race and ethnicity, and work together towards a greater understanding for children and adults. A parent meeting dedicated to the celebration and recognition of diverse families is one way to approach the subject in a positive and preventive manner.

HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT MY ACTIVITIES ARE INCLUDING MULTIRACIAL CHILDREN?

Ask the children how they felt about the activity. What did they like or dislike? Children tend to be very forthright about their feelings. However, be sensitive to each child's reactions, including non-verbal behavior such as standing aside and not participating. Facial expressions and body language offer a great deal of information about how the preverbal or child with limited language feels.

Stay active in your search for activities and materials. New resources are being developed on an ongoing basis. Network with other providers on ways to be inclusive of biracial/bicultural children in multicultural activities. The key to integrating activities and material in multicultural curricula is flexibility, creativity and respect.

HANDOUT 6.2

MULTIRACIAL AND MULTICULTURAL MATERIALS

Your classroom materials and equipment can help you develop a curriculum that reflects the children you teach while fostering their learning about others.

ART MATERIALS

- Paint, paper, clay, crayons and markers in a variety of skin tones
- Collage materials including an array of papers, fabric scraps, natural materials and magazines that represent different cultures
- Images, symbols, textures and patterns from other cultures

TOYS

- Large blocks, unit blocks, logs and planks for constructing a variety of homes and buildings
- Boats, cars, planes, sleds, carts, trains and vehicles of all kinds
- Rubber or wood figures of people representing various racial and cultural backgrounds
- Animals from different settings around the world made of different materials

BOOKS AND POSTERS

- A variety of picture and story books that reflect diversity including multiethnic children and families and a wide variety of structures and dwellings
- Class-made books representing children's lives and families
- Books and illustrations representing diverse races, cultures and abilities
- Books and other visual materials in the language(s) of the children in the classroom
- Poster-sized *Family Portraits* of multiracial families included in this educator's guide

DRAMATIC-PLAY MATERIALS

- Dolls of different cultures/races and of different genders
- A toy telephone for oral language and "calling home"
- A selection of real cooking and eating utensils from children's homes and different cultures
- Plastic food and empty food boxes from children's homes, as well as from other cultures, with print in other languages

HANDOUT 6.2, continued

- Dress-up clothes for both genders and from various cultures, not just national costumes, and props that represent the professions of children's parents
- A mirror at children's eye level
- Puppets from various cultures for children's storytelling
- Fabrics from different cultures for use as costumes, tablecloths and room dividers

MANIPULATIVE MATERIALS

- Puzzles representing different kinds of people, animals, places, customs and jobs
- Interlocking building pieces for creating homes and neighborhoods
- Counting and sorting pieces including foreign coins, grains and beads
- A variety of small baskets for storing, sorting or counting small objects

MUSIC MATERIALS

- CDs and tapes featuring stories and songs from different traditions around this country and the world
- Musical instruments from different cultures, including drums, maracas, kalimbas, bells, rattles and rhythm sticks
- Dance accessories such as scarves, ribbons and wrist bells
- Pictures of all kinds of people making different kinds of music and dancing

SCIENCE MATERIALS

- Herbs used in children's homes
- Magnifying and measuring tools that can be used for investigating the likeness and differences of objects and people
- Small pets such as a reptile or fish that might come from a different environment
- A variety of plants that may grow in different locations

Adapted from *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*. November/December, 1995.

HANDOUT 6.3

WHAT CRAYON AM I?

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Consider this activity when you or the children are doing self portraits or drawing their families.

PURPOSE

To encourage children to recognize that people are of many colors.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

Preschool (older three year olds) through third grade.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will search for the colors that match the skin color of the person they are drawing.
- Children will recognize the many colors of people in their family, school and community.
- Children will be able to select from a variety of skin tones to draw the person they want (they may not draw the color the teacher had in mind—it is what is in their mind).

MATERIALS

A variety of crayons, including at least one box of skin-tone crayons. These are available at many curriculum supply companies and art stores. "Crayola" brand carries boxes of just skin tones.

PROCEDURE

At circle time, talk about all the families in the school, how everyone is different. Look at the colors they are wearing and look at each others eyes, hands, etc. Tell them you would like them to draw pictures of their families to put up in a special place in the room.

1. Place a variety of crayons in several small containers, assuring that each contains at least 10 colors, plus all of the skin tones available.
2. Place crayons in the art area, with plain paper available to draw on.
3. Invite children to come to the table to draw pictures of their families to put on the wall—limiting the group to three or four children at any one time.
4. Show them how there are different colors for their skin and help them to match the color of the crayon with the color of their skin. Looking at their hands is the easiest way to match.
5. When they finish, ask them who is in the picture, and write what they say so that it does not interfere with the picture. Don't worry if the drawings are very abstract—it is the child's ability, creativity and conception of what they see that determines the drawing.
6. Find a special area in the room to post family pictures the children have drawn. Suggest they show their drawings to their parent when they arrive to pick them up.

HANDOUT 6.4

ONE BIG FAMILY

TEACHABLE MOMENT

Consider this activity when children are asking questions about each other's families, or you observe some teasing of children based on color.

PURPOSE

To encourage children to recognize that all families have differing and similar traits.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

Preschool through third grade

OBJECTIVES

- Children will share an important fact about their family.
- Children will listen to the family facts of other children.
- Children will recognize that families have differences and similarities.
- Children will understand that no color or person is better than another.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Photos of families, if available, and a book to read such as *Children Come in Different Colors* or other appropriate books from the bibliography.

PROCEDURE

At circle time or in small groups in the reading area:

1. Read the story about differences and different family configurations.
2. Go around the circle and ask the children to tell the group about who is in their family (don't worry about facts—you may hear what the child hopes, not what is).
3. Ask questions about commonalities: "Do you all live in a house?" "Do you all have television sets?" "Do you all have stoves to cook on?" "Who has brothers and who has sisters?" "Who has a grandmother or grandfather they see all the time, and who has grandparents who live far away?" etc.
4. Show photos if you have them, and ask: "What is special about your family? What do you see that makes this family special?"
5. Encourage conversation and exchange of ideas, and emphasize how nice it is to have some things the same and some things different.

HANDOUT 6.5

ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNING ABOUT RACIAL PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES

Adapted from Anti-Bias Curriculum, NAEYC

Even if you have not heard your preschool children specifically raise questions about race and ethnicity, silence does not mean they have not wondered about the same issues other children have verbalized. It just means that the teacher must initiate activities rather than introducing them as follow-up on a child's comment.

Creating a rich anti-bias environment in the classroom sets the stage for learning about physical differences and similarities. Refer to Handout 6.2: *Multiracial and Multicultural Materials* for the materials that should be a part of the daily classroom experience and which will also be used for specific activities. The richer the environment, the more likely children will ask questions, even in classrooms where the staff and children come from similar racial backgrounds.

The following provide additional activities to incorporate into your daily planning process. The activities will also bring up characteristics based on gender and physical ability. Be sure to include any such information as appropriate. Although the activities appear to be very simple lessons, they have two very important aspects. First, they establish a foundation block: as children appreciate their own family situations, they feel good about themselves and begin to feel comfortable with family customs in other families. Second, they are the kind of lessons that can be used again and again in teachable moments. As children share family information, use it to compare and contrast their situations.

LEARNING ABOUT THE CHILDREN AND STAFF IN YOUR CLASSROOM

1. Make a book, "We All Look Special," about the physical characteristics of each child and staff member. Take color photos of each child with a Polaroid camera, paste each on its own page, and ask children to describe themselves and write what they say under the photo. Include skin, hair and eye color among the characteristics. With darker-skinned children, be careful about having sufficient lighting when photographing them so that their features are clear. When the book is complete, read it to the children at circle time.

   Note: This activity will also bring up characteristics based on gender and physical ability. Be sure to include any such information in what you write about each child.

2. Get paint chips from a paint store. In small groups, identify the ones closest to each child's skin tone, hair and eye color. Make a poster with the paint chips and names of children. With 4-year-olds, you can also make a simple chart stating the range of colors and how many children have which color. Talk about how everyone has skin and the functions it serves for everyone.

   With 3-year-olds, provide skin-colored crayons. Help them choose the one closest to their skin color and then draw pictures of themselves. In addition, with 4-year-olds, mix paints so that each

HANDOUT 6.5, continued

child has her or his individualized color for painting pictures of her or himself. Be creative in talking about the beauty of each shade. Make a life-sized cutout of each child with butcher paper and use mirrors to help each child select the crayons and paints that most closely look like her or him to color in skin, eyes and hair. Children can take turns at circle time telling about their cutouts. Mount the cutouts around the room.

3. Cut a tiny bunch of hair from each child (ask parents first!), paste each one on a 3" x 5" index card, put them in a box, and then ask children to identify each swatch of hair. Then, take a photo of each child's face and make a collage about different hairstyles. Bring in different combs and hair materials that children use at home and have them tell each other about how their hair is fixed. Talk about how everyone has hair and what function it serves.

4. Make a bulletin board of color photos of each child and his or her family and extended family. Take photos of family members, and ask for extra photos from them. Talk about ways in which each child looks and doesn't look like family members. Highlight the point that we get our looks from our parents, but we never look exactly the same as them.

5. Read the book *Colors Around Me* to the children, and then have the children choose an object that looks like their skin color. Make your own book of *Colors Around Me* or make a poster with photos and sentences about each child.

6. To stimulate discussions about differences, read a story about a cultural group that is not in your program, and is involved in a task familiar to your children (a birthday, a visit to the doctor, a new sibling). Ask them what they liked about the story, and if the child looks like anyone in the group. How do you think you got the color of skin you have?

7. Create a poster on "Beautiful children and grown-ups come in all colors." Include photos and pictures of the parents of the children in your program—with and without their children. You might consider offering the loan of a camera, if parents do not have one. To emphasize differences, you can also add pictures from magazines or other sources.

EXPANDING CHILDREN'S AWARENESS OF PHYSICAL DIVERSITY

- Find out how your children think about racial differences not present in your classroom by reading a book about a child from a different racial background engaged in a task familiar to your children (a birthday, a visit to the doctor, a new sibling). Ask them: What did you like about the story? Does the child have the same color skin, hair, and eyes as you do? How do you think they got their different skin color? Do you know anyone or see anyone on TV who has the same skin color? Are the children doing things you do? Further activities should address the children's thinking as well as issues you know are developmentally important.

HANDOUT 6.5, continued

- Expand children's understanding of physical diversity by adapting the activities listed above. For example, to learn about black children:

a) Using dolls representing different skin shades among black Americans, have children find crayons and mix paints to match their skin.

b) Read books that show variations in black children's skin color and hair texture.

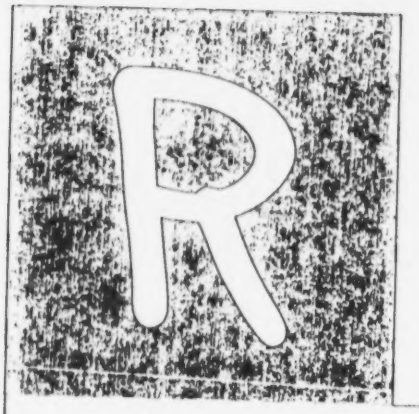
c) Create a poster, "Beautiful children and grown-ups come in all colors." Include photos and pictures of children with different skin shades, hair styles, and eye shapes and colors engaged in a variety of daily activities.

Activities should be based on all the children. However, make sure that your visual environment—pictures, posters, books, dolls—well-represents the children who are in the minority. Include parents with racially non-matching (adopted) children.

OVERHEAD 6.1

INTEGRATING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES FOR BIRACIAL CHILDREN

- Be aware of your feelings and clarify values regarding biracial families.
- Involve the family; seek their input.
- Include examples of all kinds of families in activities or discussions related to families.
- Include all kinds of families in any visual displays.
- Stock your program with books and materials which allow children to accurately identify themselves (hues of crayons and paint).
- Emphasize both commonalties and differences with a positive tone, i.e. "We are alike and different at the same time."
- Respond honestly and age-appropriately to questions.
- Seek feedback from children; pay attention to verbal and non-verbal responses.
- Stay active in your search for activities and materials.



Resources

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WEB SITES

Association of Multiethnic Americans – AMEA
www.ameasite.org
Nationwide confederation of local multiethnic and interracial groups that promotes a positive awareness of interracial and multiethnic identify for society as a whole.

The Center for the Study of Biracial Children (CSBC)
www.csbc.cncfamily.com
Produces and disseminates materials for and about interracial families and biracial children.

Diversity Resource Center
www.civilrights.org
Includes *Talking to Our Children About Racism and Diversity*, a brochure that helps parents and children talk together about racism, prejudice and diversity.

Hapa Issues Forum
www.hapaissuesforum.org
Nonprofit dedicated to enriching the lives of Asian Pacific Islanders of mixed heritage and developing communities that value diversity.

Interrace Haven
www.eden.com/crusader/irhaven.html
Information and resources for interracial relationships, biracial and multiracial individuals, parents and grandparents of a multiethnic child or anyone interested in supporting all of the above.

Interracial Voice
www.webcom.com/intvoice/advocacy.html
Site lists National Interracial Support/Advocacy Groups.

I-Pride
www.I-Pride.org
A Bay Area nonprofit organization of mixed race individuals, families and children.

MAVIN
www.mavinfoundation.org
Quarterly print magazine dedicated to the celebration of the mixed race and transracial experience in America.

Melting Pot Gifts
www.meltingpotgifts.com/links.php
Interracial resources, books, videos, greeting cards and additional links.

Pact
www.pactadopt.org
An adoption alliance that provides informative and essential education, connection and support.opportunities for families raising children of color (transracial, international, transcultural, etc.).

Project RACE
www.projectrace.com
Advocates for multiracial people through education, legislation and community awareness.

Shen's Books
www.shens.com
Multicultural Book Warehouse for Children.

Swirl, Inc.
www.swirlinc.com
Swirl provides support to mixed families, mixed individuals, transracial adoptees, and interracial couples.

The You In Me
1322 Webster Street Suite 302
Oakland, CA 94612
theyouinmeinc@yahoo.com

VIDEOS

Are You Black, White or What?
150 N. Sixth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
A WHYY Production

Doubles:
Japan and America's Intercultural Children
Doubles Project
Order through TMCNDY@aol.com.

Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families
www.childcarehealth.org
Order through the Childcare Health Program or CAEYC.

That's a Family
www.womedia.org
Debra Chasnoff and Helen S. Cohen,
Women's Educational Media.

Visible Differences: Looking at transracial adoption with clarity and compassion.
Order through Pact, An Adoption Alliance

MULTICULTURAL CURRICULA

Reaching for Answers: A Workbook on Diversity in Early Childhood Education
BANDTEC, A Network for Diversity Training, 2003
www.BANDTEC.org

A World of Difference: Readings on Teaching Young Children in a Diverse Society
Carol Copple, ed.
National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2003.

Big as Life, The Everday Inclusive Curriculum, Volumes 1 and 2
by Stacey York
Redleaf Press, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1998.

Ethnic Barriers and Biases: How to Become an Agent for Change
by Michelle Karns with Toni Blake
National Training Associates, Sebastopol, CA. 1998.

Future Vision, Present Work
Redleaf Press, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1998.

I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla, Raising Healthy Black and Biracial Children in a Race-Conscious World: A Guide for Parents and Teachers
by Marguerite Wright
Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, 1998.

Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Culturally Sensitive Care
Peter Mangione, Editor
Far West Laboratory and California Department of Education, Sacramento, CA, 1995.

In Our Own Way, How Anti-Bias Work Shapes Our Lives
Redleaf Press, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1999.

Insider's Guide to Transracial Adoption, Trainer's Guide for Transracial Adoption
Pact, An Adoption Alliance, Pact Press, San Francisco, 1998.

Looking In, Looking Out, Redefining Child Care and Early Education in a Diverse Society
Hedy Chang, Amy Muckelroy, Dora Pulido Tobiassen.
California Tomorrow, San Francisco, CA. 1996.

Racially Mixed People in America
Maria Root
Sage Publications, Bevery Hills, CA, 1992.

Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs
Stacey York
Redleaf Press, 1991.

Teaching/Learning Anti-Racism: A Developmental Approach.
Louise Derman-Sparks, Carol Brunson Phillips.
Teachers College Press, New York, 1997.

Teaching Young Children to Resist Bias: What Parents Can Do (Brochure #565).
Louise Derman-Sparks, Maria Gutierrez, Carol Brunson Phillips
National Association for the Education of Young Children. Washington, DC, 1989.

Tomorrow's Children, Meeting the Needs of Multiracial and Multi-Ethnic Children at Home, in Early Childhood Programs, and at School.
Francis Wardle
Center for the Study of Biracial Children, Denver, CO, 1999.

White Awareness
Judith H. Katz
University of Oklahama Press, 1978.

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?
Beverly Daniel Tatum
Harper Collins, 1997.

Words Can Hurt You, Beginning a Program of Anti-Bias Education
Barbara J. Thompson
Addison Wesley, Menlo Park, CA. 1993.

SUGGESTED READING

EARLY CHILDHOOD

All Families Are Different
Sol Gordon and Vivian Cohen
Prometheus Books, February 2000.

All the Colors of the Earth
Sheila Hamanaka
Mulberry Books, 1999.

All the Colors we are
(Todos Los Colores De Nuestra Piel)
Katie Kissinger and photos by Wernher Krutein
Redleaf Press, 1997.

(The) Aunt in Our House
Angela Johnson, et al.

Bear E. Bear
Susan Straight
Hyperion, 1995.

Billy and Belle
Sarah Garland
Viking Penguin, New York, 1992.

Black Is Brown Is Tan
Arnold Adoff
Harper Collins, New York, 2002.

Black, White, Just Right
Marguerite Davol
Albert Whitman & Co., 1993.

A China Adoption Story:
Why Mommy Do We Look Different?
Frances M. Koh
East West Press, 2000.

The Coffee Can Kid
Jan M. Czech
Child Welfare League of America, 2002.

Daddy Has a Pair of Striped Shorts
Mimi Otey
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 1990.

Dounia
Natacha Karvoskaia
Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1995.

Families Are Different
Nina Pellegrini
Holiday House, 1991.

Family
Isabell Monk
Lerner Publishing Group, 2001.

For My Family, Love Allie
Ellen B. Senisi
Albert Whitman and Co., 1998.

Hairs/Pellitos
Sandra Cisneros
Knopf, 1994.

Hard to Be Six
Arnold Adoff
Lathrop, Lee & Shepard Books, New York, 1991.

Heart of Mine: A Story of Adoption
Elisabeth K. Dyssegaard, Dan Hojer & Lotta Hojer
R&S Books, 2001.

Horace
Holly Keller
HarperCollins Childrens Books, 1991.

I'm Brown and My Sister Isn't
Robbie O'Shea
RKO Enterprises, 2002.

Jalapeno Bagels
Natasha Wing and Robert Casilla
Antheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996.

Less Than Half, More Than Whole
Michael Lacapa
Northland, 1998.

Little Blue and Little Yellow
Leo Lionni
Obolensky, New York, 1959.

More, More, More, Said the Baby
Vera B. Williams
Greenwillow Books, New York, 1990.

Of Many Colors: Portraits of Multiracial Families
P. Gillespie
University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.

(The) Quilts
Ann Jonas
Greenwillow Books, 1984.

(The) Rabbits' Wedding
Garth Williams
Harper & Row, New York, 1958.

Rosie's Family: An Adoption Story
Lori Rosove
Asia Press, 2001.

Snowball
Nina Crews
Greenwillow Books, New York, 1997.

Sofie's Role
Amy Heath
Four Winds Books, New York, 1992.

Something Good
Robert Munsch and Michael Martchenko
Firefly Books, 1990.

Through My Window
Tony Bradman and Eileen Brown
Mehuen, London, 1986.

Two Mrs. Gibsons
Toyomi Igus
Children's Book Press, 1996.

Tucking Mommy In
Loh Morag
Orchard Books, New York, 1987.

Tusk, Tusk
David McGee
Kane/Miller, 1990.

(A) Visit to Amy-Claire
Claudia Mills
Macmillan, 1992.

Wait and See
Tony Bradman & Eileen Brown
Oxford University Press, New York, 1987.

What Color Am I?
Loyal Nye
Abingdon, Nashville, 1977.

When I See My Doctor
Susan Kuklin
Bradbury Press, New York, 1988.

When You Were Born in Korea
Brian E. Boyd
Yeong & Yeong Book Company, 1993.

When You Were Born in Vietnam
Therese Bartlett
Yeong & Yeong Book Company, 2001.

Winter Wood
David Spohn
Lothrop, 1991.

You Be Me, I'll Be You
Pili Mandelbaum
Kane/Miller Book Publishers, Brooklyn, New York, 1990.

FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

A Life Like Mine:
How Children Live Around the World
Unicef and Harry Belafonte
Dorling Kindersley Publishing, 2002.

Sun Dance at Turtle Rock
Patricia C. Viglucci
Stone Pine Books-Patri Publications, 1996.

The World of Daughter McGuire
Sharon Wyeth
Delacorte Press, 1994.

Two Lands, One Heart: An American Boy's Journey to His Mother's Vietnam
Jeremy Schmidt & Ted Wood
Walker & Company, 1995.

All But the Right Folks
Joan Kane Nichols
Maryland Stemmer House Publishers, Inc., Owings Mills, 1985.

All It Takes Is Practice
Betty Miles
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1976.

All the Colors of the Race
Arnold Adoff
Lathrop, Lee & Shepard Books, New York, 1982.

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret
Judy Blume
Dell Publishing, New York, 1970.

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Robert Carl Cohen
California State Department of Education, Sacramento, CA, 1973. (out of print)

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Angela Shelf Medearis
Holiday House, New York, 1991.

Half-Breed
Evelyn Sibley Lampman
Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, 1967.

Hope
Isabell Monk
Carol Rhoda Books, 1999.

How My Parents Learned to Eat
Ina R. Friedman
Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1984.

I Only Made up the Roses
Barbara Ann Porte
Greenwillow, New York, 1987.

Just an Overnight Guest
Eleanora B. Tate
The Dial Press, New York, 1985.

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Jean Little
Harper & Row, New York, 1971.

Living in Two Worlds
Maxine Rosenberg
Lathrop, Lee & Shepard Books, New York, 1986.

Maria Tallchief, The Story of an American Indian
Marion Gridley
Dillon Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1973.

Nancy No-Size
Mary Hoffman & Jennifer Northway
Oxford University Press, New York, 1987.

Promises to Keep
Paige Dixon
Atheneum, New York, 1974.

So, Nothing Is Forever
Adrienne Jones
Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1974.

Squaw Man's Son
Evelyn Sibley Lampman
Atheneum, New York, 1978.

(The) Train
Robert Webber
Pantheon, New York, 1972.

(The) Truth About Mary Rose
Marilyn Sachs
Doubleday, New York, 1973.

Whirling Rainbows
Susan Terris
Doubleday & Co., New York, 1974.

Wilma Mankiller, Chief of the Cherokee
Charnan Simon
Children's Press, Chicago, 1991.

With My Face to the Sun
Robert Martin Screen
Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York, 1977.

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Adaline Falling Star
Mary Pope Osborne
Scholastic Trade, 2000.

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J. T. Becker
Seven Shadows Press, Shaker Heights, Ohio, 1984.

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L. C. Livingston
University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.

Arrilla Sun Down
Virginia Hamilton
Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1976.

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Clayton Bess
Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1985.

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Robert Lipsyte
Harper Collins, New York, 1991.

(The) Broken Bridge
Phillip Pullman
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1992.

Denny's Tapes
Carolyn Meyer
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(The) Education of Mary:
A Little Miss of Color, 1832
Ann Rinaldi
Jump at the Sun, 2000.

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Speaking Out About Multiracial Identity
Kathlyn Gay
Franklin Watts, 1995.

I, Juan De Pareja
Borton de Trevino
Collins Publishers, Toronto, Canada, 1965.

It's an Aardvark-Eat-Turtle World
Paula Danziger
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Hadley Irwin
M.K. McElderry Books, New York, 1987.

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Mildred D. Taylor
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Virginia Hamilton
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Jane Gilmore Rushing
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H. F. Brinsmead
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Helen Hunt Jackson
Little Brown, Co., Boston, 193-. Originally published in 1884.

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Harper & Row, New York, 1986.

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Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York, 1992.

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Deborah Savage
Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1992.

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Belinda Hurmence
Clarion Books, New York, 1984.

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Ann Rinaldi
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Margret A. Robinson
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Bethany Kandel
Lerner Publications Co., 1997.

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A Completely New Look at Interracial Sexuality: Public Opinion and Select Commentaries
Dr. Lawrence Tenzer
Scholars Pub. House, 1991.

American Mixed Race—The Culture of Microdiversity
Naomi Zack, ed.
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America's Newcomers: Health Care Issues for Refugees and Immigrants (Issue Paper, No. 2)
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Jane Lawarre
Duke University Press, 1996.

Black White & Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self
Rebecca Walker
Riverhead Books, 2001.

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Lise Funderburg
Morrow, New York, 1994.

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Richard Rodriguez
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Sundee T. Frazier
InterVarsity Press, 2002.

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James McBride
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Race, Parenting and Culture
Maureen T. Reddy
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A Sourcebook for Multicultural Families
Myra Alperson
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Donna Jackson-Nakazawa
Perseus Publishing, 2003.

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Transforming Racial Identity Among Americans
Kathleen Odell Korgen
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Sex, Marriage, Identity, and Adoption
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The Regulation of Race and Romance
Rachel F. Moran
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Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature
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Jane Ayers Chiong
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A Comparative Study
Wayne West Gunthrope
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Shirlee Taylor Haizlip
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Stereotypes and Realities of Interracial Marriage
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Howard Altstein & Rita J. Simon
Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000.

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Culture, and National Origin in Adoption
Madelyn Freundlich
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From Infancy through Adolescence
Howard Altstein & Rita J. Simon
Praeger Publishers, 1992.

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Cheri Register
Free Press, 1991.

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Contemporary America
Sandra Patton
New York University Press, 2000.

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Spanish/Indian Children with White Parents
Jean Nelson & Heino R. Erichsen
Los Niños International, 1992.

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Howard Altstein, Marygold S. Melli & Rita J. Simon
The American University Press, 1994.

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Sarah Armstrong & Petrina Slaytor, ed.
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David Fanshel
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Gift Children: A Story of Race, Family, and Adoption in a Divided America
J. Douglas Dates
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Jane Aldridge & Ivor Gaber, ed.
Free Association Books, 1995.

In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories
Rhonda M. Roorda & Rita J. Simon, ed.
Columbia University Press, 2000.

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Beth Hallinan & Gail Steinberg
Perspectives Press, 2000.

The International Adoption Handbook: How To Make an Overseas Adoption Work for You
Myra Alperson
Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1997.

International and Transracial Adoptions: A Mental Health Perspective
Christopher Bagley
Avebury Publishing, 1993.

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Yvette Melanson, and Claire Safran
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Loving Across the Color Line: A White Adoptive Mother Learns About Race
Sharon Rush
Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000.

The Mulberry Bird: Story of an Adoption
Anne B. Brodzinsky
Perspectives Press, 1986.

Outcome of Black Children-White Parents Transracial Adoptions
Charles Zastrow
R & E Publishing, 1977.

Permanent Family Placement for Children of Minority Ethnic Origin
Liz Norford, Steven P. Rashid & June Thoburn
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Jana Wolff
Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1997.

Please visit our web site at **www.childcarehealth.org** for additional resources and ordering information.

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Because I've got two cultures in me I'm open minded and respect them both.

Children's Health Program

Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families

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When people ask "why don't you choose?" I feel proud to say "I'm not one, I'm both!"

Serving Biracial and Multiethnic Children and Their Families

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MY BLACK SELF, MY WHITE SELF—THEY ARE TWO DIFFERENT ELEMENTS, BUT THEY MAKE ME ONE, THEY MAKE ME WHOLE.

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You learn one way and then the other...you try different things and then you find a medium where you realize your truth.

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My mom always said "you're not half...you're "Stereo"

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